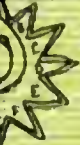


13

1623

14



- Q. Have Gremlins invaded the Post Office?
- Q. (Could that explain everything about the Post Awful???)
- Q. WHY is this PO Box carpeted and wall-papered?
- Q. WHY is the phone ringing? WHY is there a phone?
- Q. WILL Mr. Postman survive the shock?
- Q. WHAT is going on???
- A. It's just us, the SF<sup>3</sup> people... (the Internal revenue department kept hassling us about the location of our "official office," but all we have is an official address... And so... supplied with tasteful carpet and wallpaper samples, Barbie Doll furniture and a miniature microphone...)
- Q. Oh, of course, I shouldn't have asked.

1625



# WAINUS

# Janus

VOL. 3, No. 2.

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 PUBLISHER . . . . . SF<sup>3</sup>  
 PRINTER . . . . . Speed Print, Madison (Randy Everts)  
 PRINTER EMERITUS . . . . . Hank Luttrell  
 Financial support is by the Wisconsin Student Assn.

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## Why you got this issue of JANUS...

- You subscribe, you wonderful person, you: but... alas!...you have merely 1 issues remaining.
- We are about to cut you off. Avoid certain frustrations and complete the enclosed subscription-renewal form.
- You contributed, and have been immortalized on Page \_\_\_\_\_. Again, oh do it again, please!
- You are reviewed/mentioned/made eyes at on Page \_\_\_\_\_. Well, what do you think of that? Write! Tell us.
- LoC us?
- Review us?
- Trade please? Let us know: we like all-for-all trades best.
- Your name has been whispered in high places with some approval. Hear your name whispered in other places, and contribute to *Janus*.
- You have received \_\_\_\_\_ issue(s) of *Janus* so far in hopes that you would  LoC us/  trade with us/  otherwise respond. It's either been a very long time or never since we have heard from you. In some cases we may have even forgotten why we are sending you *Janus* in the first place. Thus, unfortunately, you are about to be dropped from our "hopeful" list. Unless...
  - You're just lucky, that's all.
  - Hi, mom!
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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BC Back Cover	Dan Steffan

\* various places throughout the issue

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\* Due to the extreme length of this issue, I resorted to using samples from my "neat clippings" file. These have been gathered from varied sources: newspapers, ads, junk mail, etc. All are of unknown authorship. —Jeanne Gomoll



## NEWS NURDS



It's me, Jeanne, with "News Nurds" again. You can always tell whether it's me or Jan doing the column by the title, of course, since Jan prefers to use a less crude banner. (I don't know where Jan sees scatological implications in the word "nurd," though. Not me: I've always thought nurds were those little white squishy things they use as packing material...) Well, anyway, hello, welcome to the post-WisCon issue of *Janus*, the summer edition, number eight, whatever you want to call it: We're still all here, MadCity is still here, though the latter is debatable and the former is still to be seen. If you are reading this, however, rest assured that we resisted gafiation and are indeed here. As to what state we are "here" in, I don't want to commit myself. (And that's the only way they'll get me... Gaaaaah.)

On the subject of terror, last night I woke up hearing heavy breathing across the room. Not having acquired inner-city living paranoia to a safe degree, however, I gave the noise only a second's thought. Another strange sound the radiator had added to its repertory, I figured. A few moments later, wakened again this time by music from the radio and vague apprehensions as to why the radiator had been on during a heat wave (80° F, thereabouts), I sat up in bed and realized that I had left the radio on as I fell asleep, but that the station had not been broadcasting when I woke up previously. There was no one in the apartment, and an hour or so later the station signed off for the night. Had the disc jockey fallen asleep at the mike?

Yes! The D.J. slept! The next day I called the station to confirm my theory ("Oh yeah, that new guy..." they said). The station is the community-supported station in town—WORT—so no cheated appliance store manager got angry.

This has been another MadCity-is-weird anecdote.

Now on to the "news" part of this column. The preceding was the "nurd" part.

If one word is to characterize this issue of *Janus*, it is the word "late." The smallest things conspired successfully to delay publication, like all my articles for this issue being ripped off. Like Jan's qualifiers coming up. Like MiniCon. Like my being partially laid off and scurrying around trying to get freelance illustration work to pay the rent, and a horde of other nurd-like hassles... But I won't bore you with our little catastrophes. Most of you know all about it.

As a group, we seem to be waiting for catharsis to get over the doldrums. Since WisCon, there has not been a lot going on. MadSTF continues to meet weekly at Nick's Bar, once in a while mentioning SF, and when someone asks how *Janus* is going, Jan glares at them and I sink under the table. Alternately, I glare at the tactless fool and Jan sinks beneath the cokes. Due to lack of funding, the animated film project has been postponed till the summer months when we are reasonably sure of being able to get money. WisCon did pretty well financially, although the art show lost a little and, embarrassed, we have been unable to pay the prizewinners their prizes, or won't until it appears we have extra funds from some other WisCon sources. Well, next year...

For a debriefing on that most extraordinary of Wisconsin SF cons, for those of you who were unfortunate enough to have missed it or who attended but would like to know what exactly happened, there should be some reports within.

MadSTF did a couple special programs this month, and advertised them to the community with money from the Wisconsin Student Association (the group that has also generously invested in the cost of the issue of *Janus* which you hold in your grubby little hands this very moment). The first program, in February, a couple of weeks after WisCon, was called "Your First Time,"\* and was a most successful production. In March we did a program on time travel themes in SF. That too turned out well, and was especially interesting with all the stories and ideas remembered, generated and connected in the course of the evening. Hopefully, we will get some of that discussion into print here eventually.

Otherwise Jim Cox, now titular head of the book review program for WORT FM radio (the station of snoozing D. J.'s, remember?) keeps badgering us for reviews, waving his free books and microphone in front of our greedy eyes, and generally scoring successfully his propositions. Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell, Jan Bogstad, Phil Kaveny, Diane Martin, and John Bartelt have done quite a few already. Even I, a person who invariably forgets to breathe when speaking into a microphone, have done two reviews so far: one on Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* and another on Merlin Stone's *When God Was a Woman*, also fine.

Well, I guess we haven't been all that idle... Probably I'm just projecting a self-assessment onto the rest of the group, which isn't a nice thing to do. I feel badly about the lateness of *Janus* personally, because of the unfamiliar circumstances of my procrastination. Formerly (in a scenario all of you will no doubt easily recognize) nearly any event, a friend on the phone, need for refreshment, a dirty

---

\*Do you remember your first time? You know, that first experience that touched off the delicious orgy of long, secretive, sleepless nights in bed with the flashlight? That grew into a steadily burning lust for reading suggestive literature? Who first seduced you? Was it Marry Poppins? Or Tom Swift? Or some unspeakable monster? Was your affair a clandestine one, hidden from friends and family behind an innocent "cover"? Or were you a proud lover, flaunting evidence of your non-conformity without care? How did your parents react when they found out the awful truth about your addiction? After ten years are they still hopeful that "it's just a phase"?

Then rejoice! You are not alone! Ease those years of guilt and embarrassment by meeting and mingling with others who will admit to being just as weird as you are! Come to the MadSTF meeting and let it all hang out! (This month's topic: The science fiction book that got you hooked on SF.)

windowsill, whatever, was enough to distract me from writing/drawing. Moreover, while I drew, all I wanted to do was write (and would create my longest, best impromptu letters to friends between cross hatches). But while I wrote, all my margins would fill up with an insane crowding of doodles. (You should see, for instance, the margins of the draft of this article.) Well, I'm used to all of that: I can cope with it most of the time.

Now, however, having to push my illustrations onto paying markets in order to make my rent deadlines and other such mundane necessities, I find that I have laid a new guilt upon myself, one that descends whenever I use "free time" to do such non-reimbursable type drawing or writing. (This neurosis is very similar in feeling to the one characteristic of students, for whom the amount of studying necessary seems to be an infinitely expandable—in time—quantity.) I haven't learned to cope with this one yet, and as a result, it seems as though during this past month of fewer "work" hours, I've gotten less done than I did during that whole hysterical month of rushing before WisCon.

My, we are getting all first personish and personal, aren't we?

And I'm an agnostic, ex-Catholic... Wanna know who I voted for?



Well, let's not get carried away, but I did purposely begin this column with the intent of breaking down some of the traditional third person, anonymous orientation that has been established so far in past issues of *Janus*. *Janus* began and has clung steadfastly to its semi-sercon, most emphatically genzine image, has hinted intermittently at real live humans prodding and penning and typing behind the scenes; but mostly, I think, we've managed the awesome task of baring our soul's convictions without ever telling you who we are... Bizarre. I've told you a lot about Madisonian idiosyncracies: the people who commute to work on non-existent subway systems, the moon real estate salesman, the dozing D.J., etc. And I can and no doubt will tell you more. Remind me to describe the skate-boarders who use parachutes to break their speed going down Bascom Hill sometime. But such anecdotes only hint at MadSTF characterizations.

Of course, there was the WisCon committee photo published in *Janus* 7 (taken, by the way, on Hal-

loween 1976), but I felt more openness was in order. This idea formed in my mind mainly because of my introduction to and enthusiastic participation in an APA (*The Women's APA*, Janet Small, OE), as well as the "Your First Time" MadSTF meeting in which we shared reasons for our early addiction to SF. And then also this issue, it is my turn to review the fanzines we receive in trade for *Janus* and I feel more and more as if I am getting to know people through *Janus* and infrequent cons. My involvement with fandom has been rather "backward", but I'm coming along. Maybe, next issue, Jan can continue this get-acquainted program. I would appreciate feedback from you about this—whether you think we are too impersonal, etc. (I agree beforehand that the zine could use more humorous light articles, but be forewarned: a suggestion will be returned in the form of an assignment.)

For now, however, and for this our—gasp—eighth issue of *Janus*, that will have to suffice. In this issue, we bring you a special section of reactions and responses to the "conversation" between Suzy McKee Charnas, Amanda Bankier, Jan and myself in *Janus* 6. We got quite a lot of mail on that (from MZB, Russ, George Fergus...). Also, we bring you WisCon and MiniCon reports. We bring you fiction and regular features. (Though one of our features has undergone radical surgery: John Bartelt without rebuttal from Jan now, in his own column.) We bring you a special, prepublication, sneak preview review of Suzie McKee Charnas' book, *Motherlines*. We bring you lots of book reviews and an incredible amount of fanzine reviews. (Because of our increased print-run last time, we sent out lots of *Jani* and have gotten lots of trades. Thank you.) And a special goodie is a twiltone Twiltone review. (I always did think tipped in pages were classy...) Also, we bring you an extra treat of articles concerning feminism and science fiction: with the Charnas review, there is also a story by Jessica Amanda Salmonson, and an article by Marlene Barr on *News From Nowhere*. I feel good about this.

Something which we didn't get around to in this issue, but which I thought might make an interesting column for next time (if you all respond with ideas and memories) is a 60's words and phrases festival... Remember those words, "relevant," "groovy," "establishment"—that meant so much...and then too much? Well, why not list a few of your favorites, with tongue-in-cheek definitions and send them in...

Oh yes, and before I forget, part of MadSTF has been busy on a project that one other part of MadSTF (hopefully) knows nothing about... By this time the secret and the wedding which the secret celebrates will be public and overwith, so I can tell you about the one-shot extraordinaire, *Correrrist*, depicting the joining of Perri Corrick's and Richard West's lives in marriage—symbolized in the one-shot as the incorporation of fanzines, *Corr* and *Orrerist*. Those of you who know the zines might be amused by the cover illo—a grinning, frankly weird-looking unicorn piercing an apple with his horn... Ahem!

Furthermore, we hopefully bring you some good reading. Let us know what you think. ●

#### A HISTORY OF THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART I

It is reliably reported that Leonardo da Vinci first designed the propellor beanie, as is shown in this rare rough sketch of "Portrait of the Artist as an Old Man."



# EDITORIAL

## POLITICS AND SCIENCE FICTION: A DISCUSSION, A PANEL, A PHILOSOPHY ... BY JAN BOGSTAD

As "News Nurds" indicates, Jeanne and I have both been very busy in the past few weeks. This is very good because it has brought us various kinds of good fortune, but the onslaught of numerous duties has caused me, at least, to have little time for *Janus*. Consequently, I am editing and writing articles simultaneously, which has never worked well for me. And, thus, I don't really have time to report on several activities which should be mentioned and to write an editorial also. Thus, this editorial will serve three purposes in addition to introducing the magazine for this quarter. Luckily all three are closely related.

The subject for this editorial was, to me, an obvious choice. It covers something which has concerned me a great deal of late. You see, I believe that there is a potentially creative link between literary practice and political action. Of course, I don't mean that one can write a book and that book will immediately create a revolution or improve a bad social system. Yet the minds of everyone who reads are affected by what they read and they translate all knowledge into action or reaction on some level. The reason that SF interests me in light of this possibility is because the subject matter of much SF literature is social change or at least different social systems which have somehow been extrapolated by re-arranging elements from Earth's past or present. Even pictures of the future are of this basic mold. So, science fiction offers us a way to at least look at alternative social, political and economic systems and follow the processes of change in some of them. At the same time, because SF is literature, because a writer merely has to will a change into being in his works rather than to work out the practical details of what he or she writes about, there is a lot of room for the writer to simplify the process of social change or to falsify a picture of the past or of a possible future. SF can often offer us hope and possibilities but it very seldom gives us concrete plans of action to work with in our everyday life. These are the sorts of issues which intervene between literature, or science fiction, and its potential for helping to create a new social and economic order and there are the lines along which both a Madison Science-fiction Group discussion and a WisCon panel were organized and carried out, both more or less at my instigation.

In December of last year, Phil Kaveny and I led a discussion called Politics and Science Fiction. Not everyone who attended the discussion, held at UW's Union South, was interested in or saw the connection between the two ideological realms. We nevertheless had a very lively discussion with the group breaking into two rather hostile camps (a lot of fun) by the time the evening was over.

Phil and I began by discussing several authors who have chosen to represent socio-economic questions in their science fiction. The obvious initial choices were H. G. Wells, whom Phil has studied at some length, and Aldous Huxley, both for the dystopian *Brave New World*, and the later utopian novel *Island*. We also discussed the State of Nature/State of Man dichotomy as worked in Philip Jose Farmer's two Riverworld novels, and of course, George Orwell. Later authors included Ursula K. LeGuin and Ernest Callenbach, who also figured large in the WisCon panel discussion. The first part of the discussion consisted more or less of a verbal outline of the works mentioned above. We agreed on what most of the works were depicting, but we disagreed sharply on its significance. The discussion became heated over the significance of Ms. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed* and Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia*, as we tried to decide first the message of these two books, and second the implications of this message. And it was this second debate that carried us naturally into a discussion of contemporary American social, political and economic institutions, in contrast to the Communist Russia, China, and the capitalist-fascist institutions of places like Chile.

*The Dispossessed* juxtaposes an anarcho-syndicalist and a capitalist society with one another, in the form of a planet, Urras, and its inhabitable moon, Anares. The moon is barren and not very productive. All those who live there do so only by virtue of hard work and sacrifice of the individual for the collective. Yet there is an almost equal amount of sacrifice on the part of all individuals. This leads to some problems for the protagonist, Shevik. He is depicted as a misunderstood and oppressed genius. He has the potential to make liberating technological discoveries, but is at first denied the solitude and study time necessary to make them. One could easily see this as an indictment of a collectivist society, as did one member of our group, but to do this, one has to tear away this individual's anguish from the context that the author provides and apply it out of context to contemporary reality, especially to the problems of intellectuals in such countries as the Soviet Union, China, and even, to a certain extent, Israel. I think that Ms. LeGuin meant to allude to the reasons for such difficulties, but the fact that she depicts more than this political-economic structure, that is, she writes of another planet in which centralized capitalist and communist governments exist side by side, signifies that she is not seeking such a reductive one-to-one correspondence. Just because the society of Anares has many social problems does not mean that it is worse than the society in which we live, or even that it is to be compared with contemp-

orary American reality or world reality in such a simplified manner.

As our discussion progressed, Phil and I tried to argue that Ms. LeGuin was offering a solution to such dilemmas as that of the Soviet Union and China and of Chile, the US, and the rest of the capitalist world in terms of cultural exchange. It seems evident to us even, at this early date, that no contemporary socio-economic system allows the possibility of actualizing human potential, in its present form.

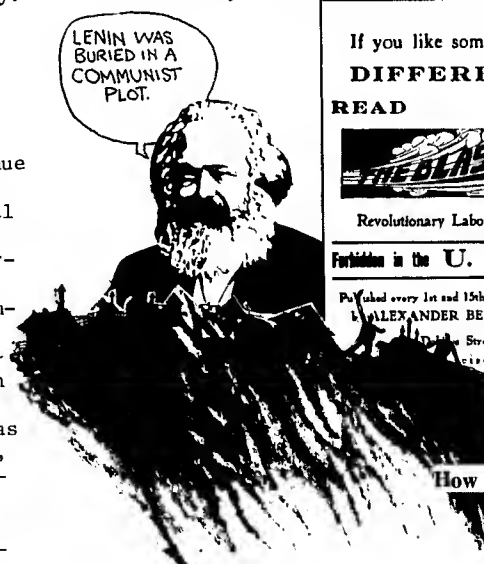
One group member followed the old "scarcity" argument, saying that he could tolerate capitalism because it seemed more capable of getting us off the planet Earth and out of the situation of scarcity which caused its less humanistic manifestations. The debate got more heated when I pointed out that it was not really a scarcity, as I understood it, but the capitalist way of conceiving of human potential, as if it were all quantifiable in terms of exchange value, that caused those very dehumanizing and anti-humanistic manifestations which he seemed to associate with scarcity of raw materials. The last thing I wanted to see was capitalism exported to other planets in the universe. It seemed to me that Annares dealt much more realistically with the problems of scarcity by mobilizing all people, similar to the way the Chinese have solved the problem of industrial underdevelopment. In any case, our discussion of politics, or more specifically, political and economic change in science fiction, moved finally to a questioning of the basic assumptions many of us have been taught to accept about the structure of society. Some of us looked at the societal assumptions, such as scarcity and competition as the best methods towards progress and natural intellectual superiority of members of certain classes in American society, to be a mythology which others took to be intimately related to the nature of mankind, a conclusion with which I strongly disagree and will continue to disagree.... (Shades of the naturalization of the relations of production of a specific historical period and socio-economic setting.) In any case, as such discussions often do, this one became an argument and eventually ceased by virtue of getting nowhere further. I certainly invite additional comment on the subjects discussed above. This is one reason for my presenting it in the form of an editorial. Also, since I found the December discussion to be somewhat unsatisfactory, I decided to pursue the subject on my own. The first form this took was an attempt at a paper on three "ambiguous" utopias, presented in Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* (incidentally, it seems there is an Ecotopian movement in Washington, in one of the secessionist states mentioned in Callenbach's book), Ms. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed*, and Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*. This melted into my preparations for the convention in February and became a panel discussion for WisCon.

I decided to create a panel called Politics and Science Fiction, but ended up recruiting people for it at the last minute. Tom Moylan of UW-Waukesha was the first to agree. The other members were to be Phil Kaveny and, in the last week, Sam Saciliano, a friend of Tom Kirlin who is teaching the UW-Madison's science fiction course this semester. Well, on Friday evening of the convention, Phil realized that he couldn't be on the panel and finish his Wells production at the same time, so he bowed out and Jennifer Bankier agreed to participate.


I really liked the idea of this panel. Even though it was a Saturday morning affair and drew only about 35 participants, we panel members were well enough divided in our opinions that lively discussion was almost inevitable. Tom took up a more or less dialectical position from the beginning, point-

ing out both the potential and the danger of science fiction as an emancipatory force in society. It was his contention that SF had at least affected all of our consciousnesses, but that to truly assess its nature and its worth as a force to change existing American Society, we would have to begin to consider what group reads and writes SF, how SF represents social, economic and political change, and try to discover exactly what range of effects this has on those who read it. I, on the other hand, began by saying that I considered SF to have a great deal of emancipatory potential, and proceeded to outline this potential in relation to some of the best novels now represented in the genre, those novels I have mentioned above. Both Jennifer and Sam were somewhat more sceptical about the potential of SF. Jennifer, extrapolating from an article she had written for her fan publication, *Orea*, pointed out that SF novels tended either to simplify the process of political change or to falsify it altogether. She also mentioned, in regard to *Hard to be a God*, that even when a writer does adequately treat the complexity of bringing about political change, the literature that s/he produces does not usually offer solutions which are at all applicable to our own situation.

Sam Saciliano did a more historical analysis of politics in science fiction, starting with some of the classics that Phil and I had mentioned in our MadSTF discussion. He moved on to take a sceptical view towards the potential of Ms. LeGuin's *The Dispossessed* in the light of the utopian tradition in 20th Century science fiction.



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#### How to Collect Unemployment Benefits

The WisCon panel, because of its more formal setting, was a lot less argumentative than the December MadSTF discussion. Our indefatigable Goh, Ms. MacLean, was there to add her comments, first attacking us for our "indiscriminate" lumping together of social, economic and political questions. This criticism interested us all as we didn't believe ultimately that such distinctions could be made. Jennifer pointed out that she had a very personal interpretation of political action. I agreed, adding that all of these supposedly distinct systems were creations of human society. Upon reflection I would like to add that the very fact that 20th Century Western intellectuals try to deal with them as if they were isolated systems, existing through laws of their own, is a symptom of a particular cultural bias created by a particular socio-economic system. In any case, a heated discussion followed.

Continued on page 29 

# FANZINES

## REVIEWED BY JEANNE GOMOLL

Amor 13 (February 1977) Susan Wood, Dept. of English, University of BC, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1W5. Personalzine or letter substitute available to those Susan sends them to. We feel privileged. I feel good whenever I read Amor: Susan Wood writes beautifully... She also writes good; she should, being an English prof. In #13 there is the continuing, incredible catalogue of all the work and projects and people that Susan somehow finds the energy to sustain. Also some news that fans interested in feminist programming at SunCon are starting to get organized and ideas are percolating.

Bioya 3 (January 1977) David Moyer, 502 Packer Hall, University Park, PA 16802. \$1/2 or the usual. Impeccably reproduced (offset) bio-science oriented zine with articles in #3 on genetic engineering, (complete with *Scientific American*-type diagrams and words that shouldn't, but do, scare me off a bit. I'm a classic victim of "math panic"), and an interview with Dr. Paul Berg on genetic recombination. It looks very important and useful and all, but more to my taste is Charo Flic's article on words, taken from an 1892 textbook (*Plain English*) with such gems as "(14) I dare say—I dare say you had a pleasant time." It does not require much courage to dare to say such things." The LoC column is, of course, called "Biofeedback."

Bleak December 8 (Spring 1976) Jim Dapkus, Box 73, Coloma, WI 54930. \$1 @ \$3.50/4. More verse in small offset pamphlet format—small press poetry feeling with weird, fantasy, and SF themes. Good reading.

Boowat 15, 16, 17, 18 (Vol. 2, Nos. 15, 16, 17, 18; Dec 1976, and Jan, Feb, and Mar 1977) Garth Danielson, 616-415 Edison Av, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2G 0M3. \$2/12 issues or trade. Pleasant personalzine. Garth needs some corflu, not so much the grammar book he talks about in this issue. But if you can get around the typos, Boowat is fun. In #15 there is a funny section on Boowat-detractors, job hassles and his new car. He reviews a 1920 sex/hygenics manual and Philip Jose Farmer porn. (Is this where the advertised "decadence" is supposed to come from?) #16 has mostly LoC's reacting to Garth's special Christmas card issue. #17 has some interesting stuff on the Australian stage version of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

Checkpoint 80 (March 1977) Peter Roberts, 38 Oakland Dr, Dawlish, Devon, UK. \$1/6 or the usual. A kind of British Karass with fannish news, con announcements, For Sale things and fanzine reviews. Like Linda Bushyager's zine too, Peter trades for news to print.

Corrcrist 13 (Vol. 6, No. 9, Spring 1977; Special nuptial issue oneshot) H. Perri Corrick-West and Richard C. West. Available for the usual (with good expectations for lucrative returns in the form of resale to the "editors"). Cover displays the two editors' traditional symbols (apple and unicorn, respectively) aptly illustrating the marriage of bodies and zines with a funny-looking unicorn spearing an apple with his horn. Hmmm... Interior content gets weirder still: footnotes galore that do little to explicate the libelous text, a SinCon report, and frankly embarrassing poetry.

The Diagonal Relationship 1. Arthur D. Hlavaty, 250 Corigni Av, New Rochelle, NY 10801. 50¢ or the usual. Surprisingly entertaining mimeo personalzine. I say surprisingly because usually when I read at the beginning of a novel or an essay (or hear of a movie or play) that the piece of literature will offend everyone, upset all *mores* and traditional definitions of right and wrong and good and bad and normal and... etc. (you know), I sit back and don't expect anything really too startling. I certainly don't pass up the pepperoni pizza fearing nervous stomach upset ... (It's like when Danielson advertises Boowat as a "decadent" zine.) I can't say I was struck to the heart of my life's delusions by Mr. Hlavaty, but I was struck by his ingenuity and wit. He does, as advertised, perceive from a slightly different and intriguing angle. (Paranoia, he says, is the delusion that your enemies are organized. It is also, he says in another place in the zine, better than no imagination at all.) Decorated with the sign of Thomas Pynchon's paranoid nightmare, the

Hlavaty publishes a highly individual, extremely funny zine. I just hope he's not offended that there will be more people doubled over in laughter than in pain.

Diehard 8, 9 (Summer & Winter 1976) Tony Cvetko, 29415 Parkwood Dr, Wickliffe, OH 44092. 75¢ per issue or the usual. Neat genzine. I really enjoyed the Al Sirois article in #8 detailing the evolution of his style and work with Wally Wood. Also a nice detailed fanzine review column by Brett Cox and a story by Donn Brazier. #9 is all LoC's.

Diversifier 18 (Vol. 3, No. 3; January 1977) C. C. Clingan, Box 1836, Oroville, CA 95965. \$1.25 each or 6 issues for \$5.75. (30% extra: Canada & other foreign countries) Marvelous zine. Fine fiction and poetry, and a really excellent, helpful column (Caveat) listing viable, paying SF-writing markets. #18, the women's issue, has a long article by MZB chronicling her development as a feminist and SF writer as affected by economic and practical extingencies. (Pretty soon her collected letters [Mota, Watch, Janus] could be published in book form.) Beautiful offset reproduction, layout and artwork: very professional. Very recommended.

Empire 8 (Vol. 2, No. 3; December 1, 1976) Mark J. McGarry, c/o Ron Rogers, Box 774, Christiansburg, VA 24073. Editorial address: Mark J. McGarry, 2 Leonard Place, #4, Albany, NY 12202. 75¢ each or \$3/5 issues. Mostly experimental fiction with an article by Don D'Ammassa on Felix C. Gotschalk and a long LoC column. As the cover proclaims, Empire is "for the SF writer." Excellent reproduction and graphics.

Exotica Erotica (Vol. 1, No. 1; January 1977) P. Lyle Craig, 2815 Amarillo, Baton Rouge, LA 70805. Tacky artwork of men's bodies (with female heads) fooling around with women's bodies (with male heads), and of a Medusa sucking on one of the things (subtly, not snakes. Guess.) writhing from her head. All this surrounded by an honest personal statement of displeasure with societal sexist role expectations (but then, why P. Lyle, do you only hope for the "liberation of man and mankind"?—)

Fanzine Fanatique 23, 24 Keith and Rosemary Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Rd, Lancaster, Lancs. England. Presumably the usual. Mostly a fanzine review zine very useful for checking out what's available and going on, and good reading too. In 23, there's a good critique of fanzine critiquing. How incestuous. In 24, there's an article reprinted from Etherline by W. D. Veney, "Pre-War Fanzines in Australia" that tells the saga of very early Australian fan publishing: the familiar problems of printing and distribution, the unique problems of making and maintaining contact with American publishing groups, the unmentioned but no doubt special problems of having to do everything upside down, and the finally crushing problem of Japanese interference in Australian-American contact.

Fear and Loathing (in the Nighttime) (Vol. 1, No. 1; January 31, 1977) Ira M. Thornhill, 1900 Peridido St, #B97, New Orleans, LA 70112. 3/\$1.00 USA, 2/\$1 foreign, or the usual. How does one explain fan life to "them"?...Ira worries. (I think "they" should explain their life, actually.) The title of the zine comes from his night reports to the day shift at the Motel Dieu Hospital in Baton Rouge. Spotty reproduction, but a good and promising first issue. The Why-You-Got-This-Issue page (that's right: a whole page checklist) is fascinating in itself.

Foudroyant (Winter 1977) Mike Blake, The Rhode Island Science Fiction Association, 168 Rhode Island Av, Pawtucket, RI 02860. 50¢ each or the usual. Nice genzine: Mimeo with a Sirois cover and lots of Mark Keller art inside. Also inside are some funny-atrocious SF cinema plots by Don D'Ammassa, an intriguing theory about Lovecraft's possible childhood and awful puns by Mike Blake. I enjoyed the allegory, "Stone Soup and the Enchanted Maiden" by Judith Schrier.

Hedgehog | Jeff Frane, Box 1923, Seattle, WA 98111. \$1 per issue or the usual. Warm, friendly, well-produced (mimeo) genzine. There's an illuminating article on MZB by Denys Howard, an excellent Kate Wilhelm interview and bibliography and good critiques (as opposed to reviews) of books, among them LeGuin on Adam's *Watership Down*, and an insightful critique of *The Crystal Ship* (McIntyre, Randall & Vinge Novellas) by Debbie Notkin. Plus more critiques and shorter reviews. The warmth and friendliness emanates from Jeff's personal editorial/introduction. (Lesleigh gave me your message, Jeff: Jani are on the way) Beautiful cover by Jim McLeod (is the title "Fetch!""?).

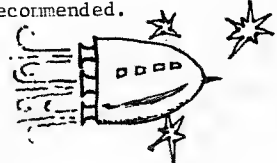
The Invisible Fan (Vol. 1, No. 2; Winter 1976-77) Avedon Carol 4409 Woodfield Rd., Tensington, MD 20795. Available for the usual or three 11¢ stamps. 25 Xerox pp. zine. If #1 looked like a #5 zine, as Susan Wood is reported to have said, TIF seems reasonably assured of forever bypassing those first crud publication levels. A perfect title for the MAC play review—"Snails of Moonlight" by Kent Bloom, really wonderfully funny cartoons by Gilliland, and more reasons not to read Clarke's *Imperial Earth* by Elaine Vormandy. Avedon does an enjoyable combination MAC/Ringling Bros. Circus report that would make the letter col people of IguanaCon grin; and intersperses her (real, this time) letter-col with her thoughts. A good fanzine. (Therefore, you are a fanzine editor, Avedon.) We received #1 (Fall 1976) later, at my request and indeed it does look like a #5. And, indeed, the bogus letter column is hilarious. (It'd be fun to do other famous people letters—like god, perhaps, or H. G. Wells, or...)

It Comes in the Mail 26, Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St., Newport News, VA 23605. For the usual. Ned lists and briefly describes everything that the postman bringeth (A good idea for a cover there, Ned?) from advertisements to fanzines to letters. Great for your files, if you've got the patience to read through this chronological listing...

Karass 27, 28, 29 (January, February & March 1977) Linda E. Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, PA 19076. 5/\$2 or the usual. Excellent fanzine/personal zine. Included in #28 are DUFF and FAAn ballots, WorldCon news and a selective fanzine review column by Gary Farber. Regular features: people news, CoA's, Con News, book reviews, For Sale items and miscellaneous news.

Kratophany 10 (December 1976) Eli Cohen, 2236 Allison Rd., Vancouver, BC V6T 1T6 Canada. \$1 each or the usual. Gorgeous zine, "an irregularly published journal of Taoism, whimsy, and bad puns." There's a humorous article in which the new energy particle, the theon, is proposed by David Emerson. (A theon is an elemental partical of holiness.) Emerson pads his thesis with a digression on his fannish initiation at Columbia. Best of the zine (best of any art I've seen recently in fanzines) is the luscious *Wendy and the Yellow King*, Part 6, drawn and scripted by Judy Mitchell and Mike Mason respectively. I mention the artist first because it is her work that I am so impressed by. That I am so envious of. That I covet. Enough: get Krat and enjoy. Were that not enough, this 5th annual issue contains a Susan Wood Article on Zen, Eli Cohen explaining the genesis of Krat's title, and MORE! (Jon Singer, Yarik P. Thrip, a restaurant review and LoC's) Good. Yum, yum.

Maya 12/13 (January 1977: double 6th Anniversary Issue) Robert Jackson, 71 King John St., Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 5XR, UK. \$1 each, or \$3/4. A lovely, truly impressive zine. In "How Not to be a Writer," Leroy Kettle painfully, wittily recalls the uncertain beginnings and fortunes of a freelance writer. Also, there is an excellent review of Chesley Bonestell's art, some interesting in-depth fanzine reviews (but why a rating system that includes Mike Glicksohn letter appearances?) and funny, well-done, and appropriate artwork. Also, a Mike Glicksohn letter. Highly recommended.





Mindrot 5 (December 10, 1976) David & Kathy Mruz, 3112 Holmes Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55408. \$1.50/4 issues, 60¢ each. Animation fanzine. Article in #5 on Warner Bros.' Hugh Harmon and Rudolph Ising, and other cartoon news.

Mythologies 10, 11 (January & February 1977) Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Dr., East Providence, RI 02914. Big, impressive, beautifully produced zine. Very little interior art, but massive communications forum between D'Amassa and many friends and commentators. #10 mostly catches up on unpublished LoCs as well as the fascinating results to the poll of Mythologies' readers (occupations/ambitions, reading preferences and habits, etc.) #11 includes another of the regularly appearing "myth" articles (this issue on psychoanalysis with lots of intriguing ideas). Of special interest is a reprinted article by Pournelle on the absence of sexism in SF, and George Fergus' extensively researched response. (Yeah, George!) And then Jerry's "rebuttal." Recommended as an excellent reference (Whip it out when someone says, "But aren't there basic psychological differences between men and women?..." ) Also in #11 is a review by George R. R. Martin on *New Voices in Science Fiction*, Paul DiFillippo on puns, Bonnie Dalzell on "urban varmints" and more. Excellent zine. Don is planning a series of articles on "feminist futures" later in the year which sounds promising.

New Venture 5 (Fall 1976, Special Art Issue) Steve Fahnestalk, Editor; and Jon Gustafson, Art Editor. New Venture Publishing, Rt. 2, Box 135, Pullman, WA 99163. This issue: \$2. Otherwise, \$1.25 each or \$/4. A splendid collection of 25 artists (including 7 of 10 Hugo finalists, 1976)-- short biographies and mostly full page representations of their work. Incredible, gorgeous reproduction, and packed into a thick plastic ring binder. Beautiful. Get it. [An aside, not a fault of this coffee table zine, is renewed awareness of how few women artists there are in fannish publishing. There are none in this survey.]

Peripheral Visions 1 & 2 (First Quarter 1977) Wally Smart, 400 Sheldon Ave., Aurora, IL 60506. Free to friends, or 50¢ each or the usual. Make friends and receive PV free. Nice-looking first fanzine: so far a two-person, offset effort (Wally writes; Pam Sook draws neat things in the corners Wally leaves). From his experience as FDA biochemist/researcher Wally brings up some interesting/unsettling ideas in his columns. Included in #1 is the transcript of Frank Herbert's GoH speech at Iowa City last November, news of the film of *Dune*, a Silverberg critique, and more. #2 Contains a WisCon report and photos, lots of reviews of non-fiction and SF, a George R. R. Martin bibliography, as well as a therapeutic-I'm-sure, shit list.

The Proper Boskonian 16 (February 1977) Sheila Glover D'Amassa, NESFA, 19 Angell Dr., East Providence, RI 02914. 50¢ each or the usual. Well-produced mimeo genzine with fanzine reviews by Mike Blake, some reviews of mainstream fiction (with SF ideas seeping in) by Mark M. Keller, and some innovative suggestions for people being crowded out of their homes by their book collections ("PB Looks at Bookcases," by David Stever).

Quantum (Vol. 2, No. 1) Paula Gold, Mike Steff, Arthur Metzger, Don Carter, Allen Curry & Kitty Lyons. 1171 Neeb Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45238. \$1 each or \$5/6. Jan & I, as parts of a merely two-headed zine,

sometimes get in each other's hair—I can only congratulate these six inhumanly cooperative human beings for managing to produce such a neat package. Quantum is an offset, sort of pamphlet-sized (8-1/2" x 7") zine of impeccable layout, distinctive design and illustration, and a good sense of humor. (Point in case: Barrell Switzer's interview of Lovecraft's ...um, "friend"...Cthulhu.) Also in this issue are some fiction, book reviews, and a regular feature-quiz: Quandrics.

Readout Poetry (Vol. 1, No. 2; April 1976) John R. Woodward, 4010 Underwood St., Hyattsville, MD 20782. 50¢ each, or \$1.20 for 3, or the usual presumably. Four-page dittozine containing some good writing. John has strong feelings about what makes for quality in SF poetry and fantasy imagery. Hopefully he gets more of what he's looking for.

\* Requiem 14 (Vol. 3, No. 2; Fevrier-Mars 1977) Nobert Spehner, 1085 Saint-Jean Longueuil P. Q., Canada. \$1/ issue or six issues for \$5 (1 year), or the usual. As always, I enjoyed exercising my limited knowledge of French on this ish. There is a cute article on *King Kong*, and a short piece on Ursula LeGuin's fiction which I recommend. The format is very professional-looking, which is understandable as the publication seems to do advertising for a French language SF book publisher. Does that make it a prozine?

Ring 1. Carol Chayne Lewis, c/o John Singleton, 5853 Houston, West Lafayette, IN 47906. 2-page bizarreness on mimeoed legal paper. "Advertising rates: \$1.00 a word." To further quote: "Issue is to be interpreted primarily as sound." Could this be a crudzine?

RUNE 49. David Emerson, The Minnesota SF Society, Inc., 343 E. 19th St. #1B, Minneapolis, MN 55404. 50¢ each or \$2/year. Emerson takes over from Haskell and the zine's tone changes. It's smaller, and, says David, will be more frequent. Also more reviews and feeling of being closer to Minnstf activity and voice. There's an excellent critique of Philip K. Dick's & Roger Zelazny's *Deus Irae* in Dave Wixon's column. (For those of you that recall the old Catholic catechism, Dick delves into the ominous implication in the answer to the question, "Where is God?") Rune is like TV's *M\*A\*S\*H*; you miss the departed star, but quality stays high because Rune has lots of good people & sense of humor.

Science Fiction Review 20 (Vol. 6, No. 1; February 1977) Richard E. Geis, 1525 NE Ainsworth, Portland, OR 97211. Hugo winning (again and again winning) fanzine. Always excellently produced interviews, articles, artwork/cartoons, and diary excerpts by R. E. G. Philosophy perhaps not nearly as excellent. In #20 there is a John Brunner column, Ted Sturgeon and Joe Haldeman are interviewed, there's a good article on SF art by Jon Gustafson, and lots & lots of reviews.

Scintillation (Vol. 3, No. 5; December 1976) Carl Bennet, Box 8502, Portland, OR 97202. Subscriptions \$3.50/year (4 issues) or \$1.25 each. Beautiful graphics; 3-column offset on newsprint. Carl explains in the editorial why he will no longer do trades and how to preserve newsprint fanzines with Alka-Seltzer. Hilarious pre-review of the 2076 Psi Olympics (where the Precognition events of 2080 and 2084 will be cancelled as exercises in futility) by John Varley, and a perfect *Analog* parody, and much more good stuff. Mike Glicksohn is at it again in the LoC column; first he accuses Janus of being a Starling front. Now he suspects Alter Ego of editing Scin...

Scottish 72. Ethel Lindsay, 6 Langley Ave., Surbitton Surrey, KT6 6QL, UK (US agent: Andrew Porter, Box 4175, NY, NY 10017. A review-zine mostly of books and fanzines; long letter col. A good place to make the acquaintance of one of the "other" English-speaking fandoms.

Seldon's Plan 40 (Vol. 8, No. 1; September 1976) Cy Chauvin, Wayne Third Foundation, Box 102 SCB, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202. Available for \$1, or \$3.50/4. Nicely produced genzine about SF, with an article ("SF & Eschatology") by John J. Pierce that describes SF as the literature that can tell us what to do when Godot fails to show up; and another SF definition article ("SF and the Death of the Future," by David Pringle). Both writers show a lack of acquaintance with mainstream writing of the late 60's and early 70's when they praise the benefits that only SF writers can supposedly bring to contemporary culture, but on the whole, thought-provoking articles and fanzine. Cy wants a "good, argumentative letter column" to carry on conversations in and the zine's content should do just that. Also in SP 40 is an enlightening review of Russ' *And Chaos Died* and J. G. Ballard's *Billion Year Spree*.

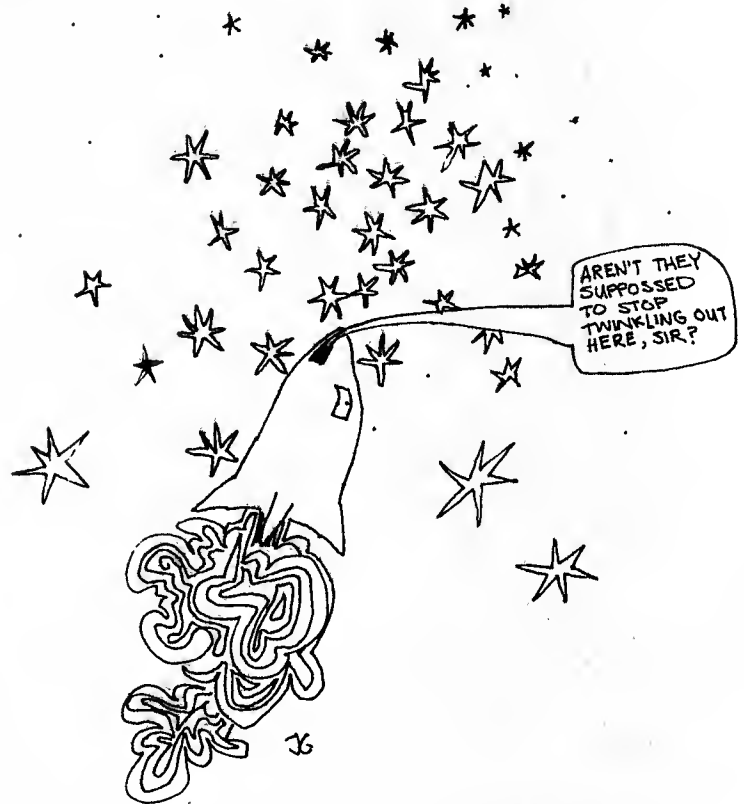
SF Convention Register (February & April 1977) Erwin S. "Filthy Pierre" Strauss, 9909 Good Luck Rd. #T2, Lanham, MD 20801. 25¢ per issue or subscription \$3 & 12 SASE's for 12 bimonthly issues, or \$4.80 and 12 self-addressed adhesive labels. Impressive, complete-looking listing of all the up-coming cons, with vital statistics. Pierre excludes Star Trek and comic cons, however. If you are a con-goer or give this looks like a must.

Space and Time 42 (May 1977) Gordon Linzner, 138 W. 70th St. #4-B, NY, NY 10023. \$1 or \$5/6. Hard SF fiction-zine with art and philosophy that harks back to the 50's era of the genre with a little superficial up-dating. The macho hero of Paul Ganley's "Ghost Story," for instance, is hinted to have actually gone to bed with the heroine before he marries her. The heroine is "not actually beautiful, but certainly pleasant to gaze upon from a close distance—for instance from the next pillow as you awaken from a sound night's slumber...rounded in all the usual good places..." et cetera. If you like that sort of story (or write it—S&T pays), S&T is a very good-looking (pamphlet-sized, offset, reduced) example. Myself, however...

Spanish Inquisition 9 (February 1977) Suzanne Tompkins and Jerry Kaufman. 880 W. 181st St. #4D, NY, NY 10033. 50¢ each or the usual. Scattered through this delightful zine are chortling excerpts from Oliver St. John Gogarty's "The Year the WorldCon Came to Flushing," real reports of an unfortunately bogus con (good anecdote on the feminism and SF panel especially). Also, in Jon Singer's column, excellent advice on how to refill felt tips (a commodity whose industry I sometimes suspect I help support to a significant degree), albino avocado news, and why divers patronize only the best dentists. Big LoC column and a list of artists and addresses who do illos for SI. Fun and good times.

Strange Dystopias 3. Bill Brummer, 11 Strath Humber Court, Islington, Ontario M9A 4C7, Canada. Available for the usual. Bill's parents have re-lented a bit and he's made it to a couple of cons now (if he made it through the blizzard to ConFusion, that is). Harry Warner's pro-space program ad, an excellent post mortem by Jack Kapica on Monty Python, and a neat little article expressing a small sense

of wonder by Donn Brazier. All this is interspersed with Bill's comments and quotations from *The Greening of America*, and other meaningful sources. Lovely layout work and graphics. Good conversational letter-col.



Tabebuian Feminist 32 (Spring 1977) Mardee & Dave Jenrette, Box 330374, Grove, Miami, FL 33133. \$3/12 or the usual. This issue of Tabebuian arrived with "You'll love this issue!" scrawled on the wrapper, presumably because Janus is sort of feminist oriented and because Tab, this month is labeled the same. Inside the issue (a small, pink, offset zine) David lets Mardee write the editorial, Mike Glicksohn praises Dorothy Parker, and the big clue (that this issue is the feminist issue) is the "Monthly Contest" in which you get points for books read and you can find out if you are a feminist. The picture illustrating this piece is a nude woman photographed with lines marked on her body indicating various cuts of meat. Those things (and the pink paper) are sometimes witty (especially the contest rating scales). The final article, however, is sad: All I can say, Esther Terry, is that before you give up entirely, try a female gynecologist. An exciting convention announcement completes the issue: MoonCon (August 31-September 2) on an island in the Florida Keys with diving on a coral reef, \$50 in advance. Write Dave for more info.

Tadstikkerzeitung 10. Don Markstein, 2533 Gen. Pershing, New Orleans, LA 70115. Available only by Editorial Whim (maybe LoC, trade or nice letter asking). Demented personalzine on twiltone. This is Don's 334th publication and the saga of the cigar roach apparently continues as do tales of paranoia

from the FBI/CIA-watched porn theater that Don manages. Entertaining and I wish I'd heard of it earlier. This year marks the 10th anniversary of his first zine *Nolazine*, and a "spectacular" celebration issue is in the works for late summer. Also included this time is profound speculation on Tyrannosaurs and pogo sticks, and a good LoC column that uses nearly the same title as John Bartelt does for his in *Digressions*, "Bagels and LoCs."

Tesseract 27. Pat Schmitt & K. W. MacAnn, Science Fiction Society, UICC, Room 519 Circle Center, UICC, Chicago, IL 60607. Xeroxed genzine with a pro-NASA editorial, an untitled but presumably fictional lyrical account of dream flying, a short story/long joke (in either case, funny) on a Mephiphistoph-eles-Faust interlude by K. W. MacAnn. Plus some book reviews and *King Kong* movie review. Not to mention \*gasp\* advertisements. Oh woe, where is fan publishing going to?

Vert 3. Gil Gaier, 1016 Beech Ave., Torrance, CA 90501. Available only for Loc/Poc at least every other issue (no sales, no trades). #3 includes one of the most imaginative con reports (WesterCon, MAC and LosConz) I've ever read—very personal reactions to people (& in one case, Bill Breiding's reaction to Gil) and events (Con programming as the Ideal learning structure) (Well...). Some good photos of BNF's and authors. Recommended. Next time Gil's doing a special issue on Mike Glicksohn: he says he needs anecdotes.

Wrinkled Shrew 7 (March 1977). Graham & Pat Charnock, 70 Ledbury Re., London W11 GB. For the usual. "Deadline for the next issue is mumble mumble." That I get, but, "Keep on chooglin"? Considering the subtle but obvious differences between American and British humor, one really wonders what happens when a language is not shared... WS, 70 pages of straight text (no illos except for the cover), is a bit intimidating (But how can you resist a zine with a cover of a shrew being administered a Caesarian section by a Slavic person with a hatchet?). There's an enormous fanzine review article on the British zines, and lots more that looks good, but the deadline's creeping up on me and I've got to get to illustrating JANUS. No time to read through this big zine.

Le Zombie 67 (December 1975). (The Koala & Kangaroo Edition) (Published every time a zombie awakens)...Bob Tucker, 34 Greenbriar Dr., Jacksonville, IL 62650. Bob says #68 may come out this year in honor of Le Zombie's 40th anniversary—a zombie stirs. #67 is one long funny, hysterical, delightful, riotous con report af AussieCon.

\* Reviewed by Jan Bogstad

## ...and magazines:

Algo 28 (Vol. 14, No. 2) Andrew Porter, Box 4175, New York, NY 10017. USA: \$4.50/3 (1 year); \$1.95 each. Canada: \$8.10/6; \$1.95 each. Fanzine gone definitely satisfyingly, and—hopefully—successfully PRO. Algo is an impeccably produced, professional appearing and reading, excellent magazine. In this issue, Andy talks about the problems of SF artists (copyrights and resale non-rights), and there is an excellent critique of the Scribner juvenile books in which Heinlein wrote his best, by Jack Williamson. Other features: Carl Sagan on the Mars discoveries, Vincent DiFate on abstract SF illustrators, Alfred Bester on SF writing, fiction by R. A. Lafferty, and lots of book reviews. Of special interest is a column by Susan Wood who demonstrates her good taste in fanzines therein. Algo is well worth the price. ■



"Cavalier's Ostrich-Plume Beanie"—note rapier-style shaft. From the collection of the Duke of Buckingham.



"Puritan's Old Rugged Cross" design—popular with Round-heads 'cause the prop went "'round."

### HISTORY OF THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART 2

The beanie gained popularity during the ideological struggles of the post-Renaissance.

One of the main attractions at this year's Minicon was the world premiere of MIDWESTSIDE STORY, the fannish musical version of "Romeo and Juliet". Instead of Montagues and Capulets, Jets and Sharks, the opposing groups which threatened to keep young lovers apart were fanzine fans and convention fans. After the play, I heard several arguments over whether the sercon, program-attending fanzine fans or the frivolous, drunkard con fans had come off the worse. Of course, the zine fen and con fen in MIDWESTSIDE STORY were broad caricatures of some of the worst traits found among all fans, not accurate portrayals of the two groups. The real question is not what are the differences, but is this a significant split among fans? Most fans will, if pressed, identify themselves with one or the other group, but I think that all of us recognize both fanzines, paper communication, and conventions, in-person contact, are essential in our microcosm.

To the extreme fanzine fan, conventions are merely the once a year in-person talk that allows deeper levels of communication to be reached on paper. On the other hand, con fans may feel that fanzines are only places where pleasant convention memories are recorded for future reference, and discussions of how forthcoming conventions should be run take place. However, the two facets of fan communication are integrally related. Those interested in fan history (for some reason, mainly fanzine fans) may object that in the early days of fandom there were almost no conventions, yet there was plenty of communication in both letters and fanzines. However, it was possible to carry on a lengthy correspondence with someone who didn't exist (the hoaxes) or who presented themselves as being of a different age and/or sex than was actually the case. Paper personalities; they seem an almost ideal way of communicating without letting prejudices and stereotypes interfere with the exchange of ideas. Yet they lack a dimension which can only be provided by an in-person meeting. Where do fans meet other fans, the people they've come to know through fanzines, letters, or phone calls? At conventions.

There are so many conventions these days that it is possible to be a very active fan and not have anything to do with fanzines. Or is it? I have long had the feeling that there is a large group of people who go to most worldcons, talk to each other, attend the program, recognize the pros, yet have no idea that there is anything more to fandom. Is such a person really a fan? I think not--they are a member of the audience, someone who sees fandom as a provider of a once-a-year entertainment. There are also fanzine readers who merely send in their sticky dollars every year or so to a few zines, but never think of including a letter or contribution. These also are not fans.

What do conventions mean to fanzine fans? Something to write a con report about? These reports often seem to be a way of filling space in our fanzines, a simple list of names and re-telling of a few incidents, but even this is an important part of fan history. Have you ever heard someone say 'I've read so much about that con I almost

AMORPHOUS  
 VERB  
 CRAPHON  
 THE MIGHTY THE DIMENSION  
 WOMEN & MEN  
 NADA  
 SIMULACRUM  
 STARLING  
 SS REVIEW  
 HEDGEGH  
 STRANGED STORIES  
 REQUIEM  
 THE INVISIBLE FAN  
 YANRO  
 RUNE





remember being there'? More important is that rare piece, the con report that really explores the convention as experience. One of the finest recent examples of this is Denys Howard's report on MidAmeriCon, Wandering About from Place to Place Without Apparent Reason. This is so different from the usual 'and then I talked to (or was that Friday night?)' type of report that I suspect many fans found it disturbing. In his writings Denys is intensely personal and open about his feelings, and WAFPTPWAR is no exception. It records the reactions of a sensitive gay man to what some felt was an obnoxiously heterosexist convention. Yet even those not overly concerned with issues such as the overt sexism of the masquerade will find much of value in Denys' observations on the atmosphere of this convention and cons in general: "All of the ways in which I fill my daily hours were gone,...I found that I had to trust my sense of people, my choices of who I wanted to spend time with and why." Certainly every-

one makes their own convention, and the con Denys attended is not the same MidAmeriCon I experienced, but reading his words helped my clarify my own experiences. Where else but in fandom do you have that opportunity, of re-experiencing the same event you participated in from so many different viewpoints?

Another view on MaC comes from Gil Gaier, in Phosphene 5. Like Denys, Gil writes mainly about the people he met. "For anyone interested in what programs I attended-- there were not many, and they were well spread out. (It was people I hungered for.)" His word pictures of those he 'touched in passing' build up to a crescendo in his encounter with the APA-50 people. Each member of that group is described in words, 'abstracts' which probably tell more about how Gil related to them than what they are actually like. Added to this is a photo section (unlike so many photo pages, it is not crowded with group pictures for maximum exposure, but is limited to good pictures of a few people.) In part, this is the story of a new fan learning how to attend a convention (don't go to bed early so you can be fresh for the morning program; learn to live on the energy of the con itself.) More importantly, it is an example of how in-person contact at a con does surprising, unexpected, exciting things for paper communication.

In Ashwing 21 (from Frank Denton who, unfortunately, was not at MidAmeriCon), Jeff Frane writes a classic 'neo learns about conventions' report (titled, appropriately enough, "Neo Meets Big Mac.") A typical first con report, written day by day, event by event, Jeff shares his encounters with authors (real people! -- but some with feet of clay) and fans, reactions to the program, and his glimpses into the entirely different con other people were attending (3 days spent watching movies?) Yet Jeff, too, writes mainly of people and of what he learned at the convention: "next time, I'm going to be spending a lot more time with people. I hope that by then I will have met more people, in person and through the mail, that I can sit down with...and talk and talk. That's really what it's all about, isn't it?"

Fandom is not 'about' science fiction, or Star Trek or comics or sword and sorcery or space colonization or writing--these are some of the interests which bring us together in the first place, but fandom is really about communication. To draw lines which limit people to only one of the possible modes of communication is to negate much of what is valuable and worthwhile in fandom. We are not con fans and fanzines fans -- we are people trying to make contact with others any way we can.

# LETTERS \*

\* FOR LETTERS RESPONDING TO "CONVERSATION" IN JANUS 6, SEE P. 30.

[Since we did not have enough room for letters in Janus 7, our WisCon issue, we have extended the letter section in this issue to make room for the accumulation. We regret not being able to print more than this sampling. —THE EDITORS]

Jeff Hecht  
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...The discussion of alternate universes was...to my taste. I think the main attraction of such stories is simple: they're fun. When done properly, they open fantastic realms for speculation, and second-guessing history can be a fascinating game. I think we've all played it at some time or another, as a kind of mental exercise. In the pure form, I would think an alternate-universe story would be rather like something from Olaf Stapledon: almost pure history, with very little plot or characters. Only more often it's done with a historical character as a focus. And most frequently it's done with some rather uninteresting people running around in the foreground obscuring all the interesting events in the background. (The Whenabouts of Burr by Michael Kurland [the most recent book of that type I've read] has that problem—we only get glimpses of Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, far more interesting people than the main characters.)

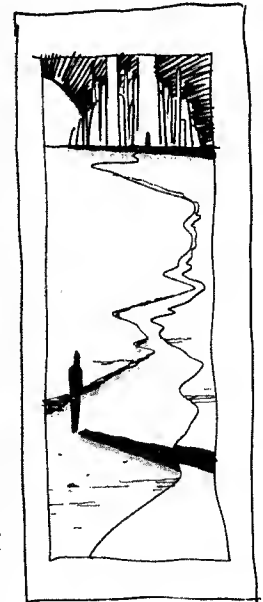
There are also more serious literary ways to play with the idea, like subtle approaches to theories of good and evil, or dissections of determinism. Or the variant ways of human thought, or the whole concept of alternatives and "forking paths". (Do I remember Borges correctly?) Stories on some of those ideas are sitting half-baked in the back of my mind; hopefully someday they will emerge.

John's story obviously ties into that in some ways, too. It's an interesting concept, even though I've seen parts of it done before. From a fictional point of view, it's a bit sketchy, almost a plot outline filled out with a few scenes sketched roughly. But it conveys the idea John wanted to convey (I think) and on that level is successful. Hell, I don't like half of F&SF either, and I found the last Amazing utterly without redeeming social importance in the fiction.

Lesleigh's article on Phil Dick raised points that I've heard before. I enjoy his novels, though at times they seem too much repetitions of Man in the High Castle or Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch. What is fascinating about Phil Dick's writing is the way in which he plays with reality—deftly, with skills that are so well matched to the problem, like A. E. VanVogt at his best, only in control and understanding what he's doing. The problem is that Dick keeps writing the same story over and over—different characters and background, but same basic formula. It's a common trap—Bob Silverberg fell into it for a while; if I was more awake I could probably think of others. But after a while the writer comes to sound like a parody of him/herself. I love the way Dick tells stories, but I can easily overdose on his fiction.

Is it perhaps that I am not, basically, a philosophical person? That I am oriented toward realworld things, and need such referents to tie myself to reality and things that I can understand? Perhaps that's some of the reason behind my attitude, but still it's hard to sort out differences in theme among Dick's works. Lesleigh shows that in developing a central theme—she pulls points from different novels to develop a single idea. And that's a real and important limit....

...Janice is right that the contents of a publication must reflect the editor's judgment of the readers, and that we shouldn't expect too much of scholars. We shouldn't expect too little, either. I think of two publications which I came to know during the two years I spent in grad school in education: Change and Psychology Today. After a while, all the articles came to say the same things, reflecting a lack of imagination among the authors and a sloppiness among the editors. Change—which I read much more regularly—became sterile. Most publications have to strive desperately to avoid that; otherwise they lose their most valuable asset—their readers. (I think of one exception—magazines that cater to people in a transitory phase of life. I know some are directed to would-be brides, but the ones I'm familiar with are aimed at new or expectant mothers [with an occasional bone tossed to fathers—we were talking about sexism, after all].)



➔ Buck Coulson  
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...In his reply to my letter, Tom Murn seems to imply that popularizing something gives the popularizer proprietorial rights to it, and I say the hell with that attitude. But I won't go on about it, having just read the following i. a Denny Lien fanzine. "You continue to evade my objection to your objection to Jerry Stearns' objection to your view of his view of man." Yes, indeed, and all too many continued discussions get to sounding like that...



➔ Mike Glicksohn  
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As a recent graduate of the Robert Bloch School of Fanzine Response I'd like to thank you for Janus 4 with its impressive two-colour cover and interior graphics, enjoyable fannish sections and also the other stuff. Janus is certainly becoming a most attractive production and if not all of it appeals to me, that's my problem, not yours. But I really appreciate your giving me one more chance! It's warm human gestures like this that give us new young fans the sense of belonging necessary to stay on in fandom. Really appreciate it, gals!

Read the PoC from Mixon: cute, real cute. Whatever you may say about him—and who doesn't?—he wasn't a crook, and in the fullness of time, I expect he'll get a pardon.

Janice either has a rather bizarre sense of humour or her contributions to "JB vs. JB" have to be perhaps the worst evidence in support of women's equality ever to appear in a feminist-oriented fanzine. Having dealt with male height and the pronunciation of Asimov's name (pretty heavyweight topics for a mere woman, I guess) what will we see next: a contest to see which convention-attending pro has the biggest cock? Tsk, tsk: what would Helen Gurley Brown say about it all?

I cannot argue with Avedon's passionate statement on her interpretation of equality for women, but I'd like to add that often the shoe is on the other foot. Equality for women might free men of sexual stereotypes, too.

➔ Allan Chen  
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...I was very impressed and interested by your editorial (and by the lettercol, the good representation of viewpoints in the reviews, and the...) and the feminist viewpoint of Janus. Women's lib, equality of the sexes, the feminist movement, etc. are areas that I have had only minimal contact with until rather recently, about a year ago, when I underwent a consciousness raising by a friend who leans toward the militant side. I have always been a bit confused by the many and disparate viewpoints of those involved who discuss feminism, prejudice against women, and especially women in SF.

I also have to admit that the whole issue of equal rights for women, and stimulation of a change in attitudes toward women has bothered me on philosophical grounds. I'd never before realized the extent to which women are relegated to a lower rank in society. I suppose that says something about my own habitual prejudices.

What is the right way (or what are the right ways) of representing the female's point of view in science fiction, or any literary form? It seems to me that women as well as men have been so accustomed to harboring the societal prejudices drummed into them by their environment that it is almost impossible to get a "fair" representation of a woman, one that puts women on a more equal bias [sic] with men...

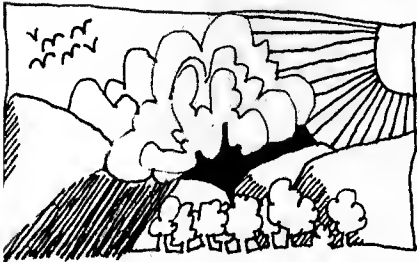
➔ George Fergus  
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...I found Pete Brown's review of the last issue of Extrapolation rather annoying. He seems to have been more interested in trotting out his own pet peeves than in producing a factually based evaluation. The most laughable part was his conclusion about the compartmentalization of knowledge by college professors, based on the absence of Lessing and Nabokov from my bibliography of SF novels with female protagonists, since as an engineer I am about as far away from being an English professor as you can get while still having a college education. One might more accurately cite compartmentalization of SF by booksellers.

Brown concludes from this one issue of Extrapolation that academia is "acutely conscious of Affirmative Action, bibliographies, and the search for Little Bits of Knowledge". If he had bothered to look in the previous issue, he would have found no bibliographies at all, and no articles on women in SF since 1973. That one can't make valid overviews until one has accumulated little bits of knowledge is particularly obvious from Brown's own incredibly simplistic suggestion that 50s SF arose out of McCarthyism, Madison Avenue, and Elvis, and 60s SF was shaped by Vietnam, Chicago violence, etc.

I expect that Brown would object just as much to any overviews of the SF field presented in previous issues of Extrapolation, since he gives short shrift to last year's article by Michael Wood in The New York Review of Books (which he mistakenly calls New York Times Review of Books, apparently confusing it with the book-review section of The New York Times!). Also, I think the editors of Science-Fiction Studies would be rather annoyed with his assertion that Extrapolation is the only significant journal of SF criticism. (And I wouldn't be surprised if SF Commentary had more influence on worldwide criticism than does Extrapolation.)

I can't say I was particularly enthused over Thomas Murn's article either. I don't really follow his line of reasoning that Delaney's Triton, with its technology



enabling people to change sex and overcome physical defects, signifies a liberation of SF from the science-worshipping of the 40s and 50s. (Pohl? Sheckley? Sturgeon? Farmer? Bradbury?) But then I have always had difficulty following the argument that SF's overconcern with physics justifies changing to an overconcern with metaphysics.

↖ Avedon Carol  
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I find that Janus is one of the few fanzines around that I actually enjoy reading. Jeanne's editorial was useful and thought-provoking, and her review of *The Man Who Fell to Earth* added a dimension for me to a film I already thought had more dimensions than I could ever describe. I love Nick Roeg anyway. (Did you notice that when Bryce's lover pulls the film from the camera, although she has been taking them herself they appear to have been taken by a third party? Typical Roeg.) And I felt the film made some tremendous statements about Power, but I had missed some of the possibilities that Jeanne came up with....

...I see no place in my letter [about the Aurora reviews] where I demanded that the story, or any story in the anthology, should have made a statement about how rotten men have treated women. And I said little about the fact that the hero of the story was male, although I admit I did imply that I would have preferred a female in the role. I did say that it was a nice story, and, frankly, I probably would have been pleased with all but that last section if I had run into the piece anywhere else.

Nor did I say that the only reason the captain was pleased to be able to share his victory dinner with a female was because he figured he'd get a good fuck out of it. However, he does imply that he is getting something from her that he couldn't get from a man, and if men and women are equals and sex roles no longer apply, then that tenderness, compassion, and "feminine softness", those nurturant qualities which are now considered among the feminine attributes which the *viva la difference!* school of thought is always talking about when they put down "wimminslib" would indeed be available from a male crew member. Which leaves what, Mr. Murn, for the woman to provide that a man cannot? If indeed he is thinking of some form of companionship other than sex, then perhaps the point would have been better illustrated if both captain and crew-member were males, and he could congratulate himself on the fact that, while the enemy captain was probably sitting around wishing he could have such companionship (which he couldn't get from his macho crewmen), his own crewmen were able to let their softer human facets show through. Or, if we are to believe that equality has not eradicated the inability of most men to be nurturant, perhaps we should also have had a glimpse of what was going on in the crewwoman's mind—the wish that she could be sitting down to dinner with a woman who could display these traits. If we are to assume that, as the title and introduction to the anthology suggest, these stories are about societies and social possibilities after equality has been achieved, then we must assume that the qualitative difference between women and men has finally been reduced to what it has really been all along—the reproductive functions. Which means that the difference between sitting down to dinner with a woman and sitting down to dinner with a man is the difference between whether or not you're going to get laid. If such social change will still not teach men to be as useful for companionship as are women, then again the greatest benefits will go to men, for women will still be stuck with men as an opposite sex, and we would be better off as lesbians where we could have that companionship. In which case we would probably not bother to get on your ships with you and waste our time sitting down to dinner with you when we could be with each other instead. Again I say, if you want those "tender, feminine touches", you, men, will have to provide them for yourselves.



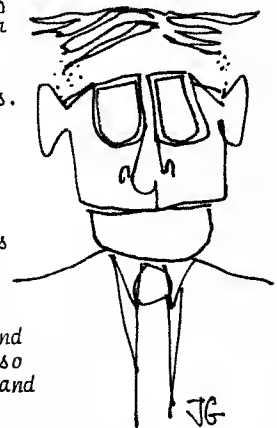
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...I haven't been active [in fandom] for about five years. ...By 1969-70 fanzines were getting boring anyway—politics was making strong headway, and that left me far behind.

Still, Janus has great personality—I mean a rambling lettercol in 1977!! Wonderful! But what's all this talk about feminism...!?! I thought that went out with Afros in 1969. "Some of my best friends are women..." Assuming most of your readership is well educated, I don't really believe subjects like "we're all equal" are necessary. Supposedly, a liberal attitude prevails: So we're all equal—so what? That does not make for interesting reading... It's wrong to kill, OK? But who's gonna talk about it? It's understood! Still, some of the best books revolve around murder—and male domination (hero + his woman) and sometimes female domination...not often, though! E.R.B. was a male supremacist—so what? The point is he wrote great escapist literature. Read the Bible sometime and complain about that book.

[It sounds as if you have been out of touch, or perhaps in hiding, from a whole lot more than just fandom in these last five years if you believe that feminism went out with Afros in 1969. Writing done by feminists can be, and often is, very exciting—for the same reason that any literature written by people in the process of changing their self-images and life styles (and in effect their culture's self-image) is exciting. Feminist SF is exciting for the opposite reason that makes male domination/supremacist SF very very dull, i.e., that it is a reactionary literature of those who cannot conceive of, and barricade themselves against, change.

[I suggest that you have a lot of catching up to do. —JEANNE GOMOLL]







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...Every time I see the term "revolution" used, I'm reminded of my uncle the spy. He'd put on a Russian accent and say:  
"You peasants, arise! When the revolution comes, we will eat peaches and cream!"

"But I don't like peaches and cream."

"When the revolution comes, you'll eat peaches and cream and like it!"

No offense meant, but that is what runs through my head every time I hear that word....

...Sometimes I want to test a theory rigorously. That is, that I can almost always tell whether the author of a story was male or female. If female, the story will usually rub me the wrong way. (Can I help it if I was raised on male-written stuff?) There is some slight style difference between books written in English and books translated, for me. This gives a little extra buzz to Boullé's *Monkey Planet*. Xenophilia? And if there is a basic contemporary American male style, a b-c-A female style, with European books showing a different style—it could be like affectional relations. Could it be that the female style is too familiar to my own day-dreams, that I need something more exotic, something I wouldn't have thought up myself? Doesn't explain why men like male authors. Holdit. Reading female-authored books strikes familiar chords, so reminds you you're female, and if you'd rather not be the gothic heroine who has her First Love die in her arms, is a governess, snaps a couple of women out of suicidal depression with her bright youthful vigor, saves a city with her sweet voice, is kidnapped and Threatened with Ravishment but Rescued by her Real True Love—folks, I just gave you the plot of *The Ship Who Sang*—and you'd rather be a hero, well, naturally, even an unfamiliar hero will be more fun than a familiar heroine. (Gothics are the heroin of the masses.) And since anything that isn't familiar will be more heroic, we like it better. Hence the theory: anything written by women is too familiar and no fun unheroic-thought-response to stories by "I don't want to read about sex and babies." Anything unfamiliar is therefore more heroic....

[Your survey wouldn't support your prejudice. To define all woman-written literature as being about babies and sex and man-written literature as being heroic is an incredible, foolish generalization. What about C. L. Moore's *Jirel* stories? (Not unfamiliar and heroic?) What about Thackeray's novels? (Not familiar tales about babies and sex, or "manners" as the genre was named?) What about William Carlos Williams, who felt that only the very familiar could be reflected upon and inspire the creation of art? There are a million "what about"s that could be inserted here in reaction to your statements. However, I think it is primarily your own suspicion that women's writing is different from and inferior to men's writing that prevents you from being more open-minded. Five years ago, a lot of people used to talk about the inferior quality of women's voices on the radio, how you could never take them seriously when they were, for instance, reading the news.... —JEANNE GOMOLL]



Harry Warner Jr.  
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...I liked the WorldCon notes [in Janus 6], wishing all the time that each contributor had written at much greater length. Doug Price's review of the play might turn out to be the most important thing in this Janus, from the standpoint of future generations of fans, because I don't believe anyone else has described the strange WorldCon feature at any real length. [The Invisible Fan #2 did. —JEANNE GOMOLL]...

...I hate to admit it, because it makes me look even stupider than usual and is a potential insult to the author. But I can't be sure if "The Talons of Horus" is meant seriously or satirically. My first impression was that it was a semi-serious experiment to write in the Lovecraft style about events considerably different from those which normally occur in the HPL fiction. But I think it could be enjoyed either way, depending on the mood I might be in when I happened to read it. [I enjoy Lovecraft's fiction, when I don't read too much of it too frequently, and I enjoy the well done pastiches, just as much.]...

...The art work is splendid throughout. I was specially tickled by the idea and execution for the cartoon on Page 19 depicting the WorldCon play, and by the front cover. Green title lettering on a picture done in blue seems like the worst of all ideas, sight unseen, but in this case it works just right. Your format reduces the type almost to the vanishing point for the more elderly eyes among your readership, mine for instance, but I read the entire issue without suffering a headache, so you didn't go too far....

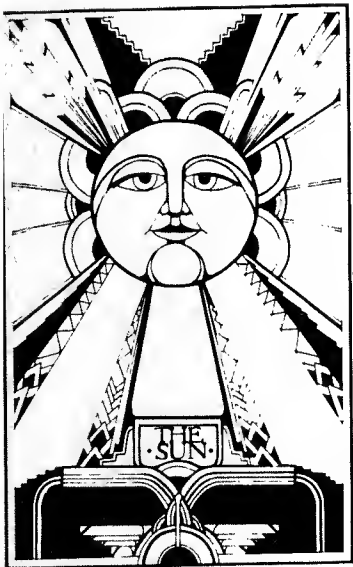



Bob Tucker  
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Many thanks for sending me the newest Janus [#6], and I truly appreciated it. All of the magazine was a delight to read, but I especially liked that luncheon-conversation with Charnas, Bankier, Bogstad, and Gomoll. I congratulate

the two of you for having the wisdom and foresight to capture on tape the four of you. Easily, the best in the issue.

The WorldCon and WindyCon reports ran a close second, but then I'm a sucker for con reports and make no apologies. I'm indebted to John Bartelt for even mentioning the Neo-Pro Workshop, which I suspect was the most forgettable item of the whole convention. His is only the second mention of the workshop in all the con reports I've read, and I'm almost ready to believe there were only two people in the audience....



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Jeanne, it's too easy to criticize a writer for not doing what he/she "should" be doing, for not asking or exploring the "right" questions. I read *The Left Hand of Darkness* for the title (being somewhat sinister myself). In that I was a bit disappointed, though I liked reading it anyway. Ms. LeGuin, by neutering her characters, has a chance to look at the question—the male/female dichotomy—from a neutral point of view, less emotionally charged than either end of the "problem".


Ms. LeGuin is part of a movement: a group of people trying to take a step ahead, both for themselves and for humanity. But it doesn't seem to work to just strike out forward. We have to take a step outside to raise a few questions, take a step backward to tie together some things that we may have missed before, take a step forward to postulate an answer or two (and raise a few more questions in the process), and then perhaps turn to let someone else take a step past.

I see your editorial as asking these writers to be bolder in their visions of what we could do as human beings, without making us become not-so or more-than human. I certainly agree with that. There are many questions there to be explored. How can we evolve and still remain human? Or how can we remain human and still evolve? Can we? If we are still essentially human, what in us can or will change so that we remain so? Will we always be the masses of contradictions that we seem to be now? Given the infinite number of ways a person can think, feel, and behave, and the rapid rate of change going on about us, have we any hope at all of integrating the human personality? Perhaps it is this very human personal struggle which we all experience that keeps us viable as a species. If this is so, is it desirable to rid ourselves of this? Do we really want to be happy and always at peace? I'm not at all sure that I do.

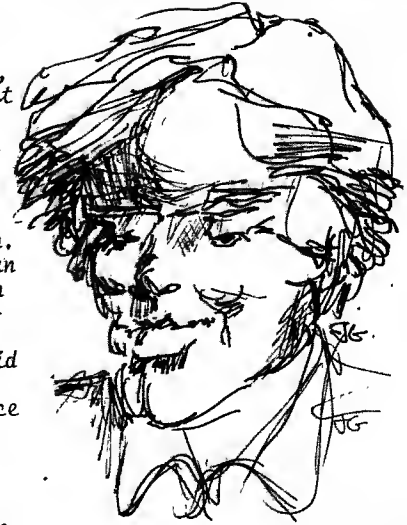
Your editorial proved that Ms. LeGuin was successful in at least raising some questions. She's built another step in the staircase that we all are climbing. She can take a few more steps herself, and others will follow her up. And people like you are helping others to be a little bolder in their step. Thanks....

...A comment to Harry Warner Jr.: Can a message be as well understood when it is stated in non-fictional form as it can be when told in a story form? It seems to me that the whole purpose of having humans in a story is so that the readers can identify with them, and perhaps be able to vicariously feel what they feel, and experience what the characters experienced. This is certainly not going to have the same kind of impact that a mere factual statement would have. It may not even be what the writer intended to convey, but if it relates to something in the experience of the reader it will stir something in his/her self that a statement of fact simply could not reach. I don't think that entertainment is the "only important virtue" a story can possess.

Thomas Murn, on Dhalgren: I have felt, since I read Dhalgren, that the piece was about people who are on the road, just traveling thru life, and not trying very hard to make an impression on anything. They may indeed make that impression, but they weren't trying to. I could identify with Kidd because I have been "on the road", living as life happened to me at the time, with no real past or future. I found that kind of life fun for a time, but not for a life-style. Slice-of-life fiction often seems to be pointless or directionless, but I found Dhalgren, despite the seeming lack of beginning and ending, to help me find out what it was I was doing while on the road so many years ago. It seems to have taken me a long time to learn some of the things I should have learned back then. I'm glad I finally did. Personally I enjoyed reading Dhalgren. Thomas says that it came out in January of 1975, but I finished reading it on January 2 of that year, and it took me a long time to read it, so I suspect that they updated their publication date a bit.

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...i want to say again what i said last time: which was essentially: GIVE ME MORE! you, ms Gomoll, come on with a very intriguing essay, emerging out of a fascinating quote from Monique Wittig, but, despite the fact that i find what you say both worthwhile & provocatively off the mark occasionally, i mainly find it stopping too soon. youve made a few suggestive comments; youve set up the parameters for a discussion in depth. you havent even begun that discussion in the way that i believe anyone who has seen the implications of that Wittig quotation (& i must believe you have; you picked it up & used it) must. look, i dont know how to criticize you because you havent said enough. but my big argument is with your having said that you see "Woman on the Edge of Time" as well as *Left Hand of Darkness* as implying that the only chance is to change biology, because that's where the problem lies, not in socialization. that just aint so. i suggest you get hold of the novel *Woman on the Edge of Time* (Knopf), because it's a stunner, anyway, but, altho the biological engineering in the utopian society is important, i think it's made obvious that it is a result of new methods of education, socialization, & that the kids in that society are taught most of their behaviour. (as an aside, Joanna Russ in both her story, "When It Changed", & *The Female Man* argues socialization as most important.) as your quotation makes evident, LeGuin defends herself from your attacks well enough without any help from me. moreover, in *The Dispossessed*, she argues (if she doesnt always



show as strongly as one might wish) precisely your point of view. but, you didnt bother to mention The Dispossessed. why? (i dont think the fact that you were taking Aurora as your main study-work is a good enough answer; but, when i say this, i'm back at my earlier point, that i want your article to be longer & more detailed.) but i'm glad youre writing such articles, even when theyre too short, from the feminist point of view youve adopted. it's important to keep articulating it, for evryone, not least those men, like me, who want to understand but backslide easily if we're not continually reminded, partly because of our socialization.

Tom Murn's continuation suffers from the same defects as last time; basically, it is still not enough, tho what he does say is good. especially on Triton. i am puzzled, however, that in an article on this novel in a fanzine explicitly feminist in direction he should fail to point out the fact that Bron is out of place in the culture Delany constructs precisely because he is an atavism, a macho 20th century male in a world where such macho not only doesnt suffice but is anachronistic & disabling. the ending of the novel is utterly dependent upon Bron's character, & the deep characterization Delany has provided of him (& her). but Murn is good on some of the aspects of the novel & it's good to see another writer appreciating Delany's craft....

...i know that i want to read ms Charnas's new novel, & so i begin to wonder/worry if she is trapped between 2 mutually exclusive areas of publishing. that is, why doesnt she try one of the feminist presses? shouldnt a feminist press, interested in new ideas & speculations on women's place, be interested in such a novel? no? because it's "sci fi"? & the publishers (i'm sorry Judy Lynn delRey turned it down, but, despite her business sense & all, i wouldnt expect the wife of Lester delRey to be that ideologically in line with what ms Charnas is doing) dont want it because they have an idea of their audience that excludes such a novel. yet Fred Pohl published both Delany novels & The Female Man (which i am interested in: did it sell well enough? i know that a number of feminists who dont read sf nevertheless picked up on it in Canada; did the same thing happen in the US?). has he turned it down yet? language is difficult, but i think your group was sensible about it. Marge Piercy, in Woman on the Edge of Time, comes up with "per" for an allaround pronoun, subject & object, for the third person singular. after awhile, while reading the novel, i was using it too....

[As I wrote you, I agree entirely that my comments about Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time were inappropriate, this discovered after I read the novel. (My original comments were on the short story.) The novel is indeed fantastic, and, in fact, its major theme has to do with how an individual can and must struggle against things-as-they-are, with her available physical and mental resources, not relying on genetically changed physical or mental capacities. There will be a full review of that book by myself in the next issue of Amanda Bankier's The Witch and the Chameleon. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

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...In Janus, I've read only the movie reviews so far (being curious about your collective opinions about films I've seen), and I enjoyed them in general, though have large disagreements with respect to Man Who Fell... On the one hand, I feel you perceive more "art" and coherence than is actually present; and on the other, I think both you and Russell/Martin are oft confused by things that I see as brilliant touches, or by things that are initially ambiguous but which later come pretty clear. For instance, the monorail "mobile home" on Newton's homeworld, which you mistake for his spaceship (!), and the confusion over where Newton points when he indicates his place of origin—this latter gesture I found electrifying, for he is obviously (to me) ever so casually gesturing toward a point on the celestial sphere just below the horizon. For me the major ambiguities of the film involve metaphorical overtones that are extraneous (I think) to the SF element, and are basically tied up in the final segment where Newton is "operated" on in various ways (apparently to make him more permanently a human simulacrum, to which end they fuse his contacts to his real eyes...but do not blind him as he anticipates, and also do something strange to his nipples [his ersatz nipples, I should say]). The final scene of the film seemed to convey to me that the Man Who Fell to Earth was indeed an alien, who is eventually transformed into the "new" David Bowie....

...Other startling bits ("time warp" visions, astral projections) seem to be carryovers from Bowie's first SF film project, which was to portray Valentine Michael of Heinlein's Stranger; this urge somehow became redirected into the present film.

There's more, of course, things that threw me, and still do, which few others have mentioned and no one (far as I know) has written about. I basically feel Man Who Fell is a turgid, much too self-consciously "arty", pretentious, coy, and needlessly choppy effort, with some interesting and even fine acting, and a lot of silliness and reticence elsewhere, needless buffoonery, needless caricature, wantonly muddled transitions, lapses of logic (some important points covered by R/M), and thoroughly undistinguished cinematography—including romantic fades to otherness, sepia-toned hootenanny-flashback into pioneerdom, unexpected intercuts of vignette face-off cameo-portrait profile shots of Bowie and—is it Candy Clark? Or is it someone else? It could easily be the red-haired, high-cheeked consort of the black secret(?)-agent, a young woman who, though strikingly attractive, also bears a striking resemblance to the image of David Bowie conveyed by the film. Accidentally,



perhaps. But I found myself wondering. This is a directorial lapse, if it means nothing.

There were many fine, even lovely touches throughout, things to make one smile in sardonic empathy with the alien, or to make one grimace with him at his unappreciated but nevertheless intense, prolonged privation. There's also much that is shallow, even sophomoric, and stupidly cryptic (or stupidly misleading). On the whole, I thought it a failure, and possibly even a cynical effort (or else Roeg is too enamored of his role as a film stylist)....

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...Don D'Amassa, in the lettercol [Janus 6], suggests the heterosexism in *Let the Fire Fall* (as evaluated by Jeanne in a mimeo issue) reflects that character's attitude, not the author's. I disagree, as heterosexism crops up in other works by Wilhelm. In *The Clewiston Test*, Page 115 of the hardback, Clark and Anne play a game in which they tell each other what they hate most. Included are artichokes, menstruation, and homosexuals. This was such a startling slap in the face that I could not enjoy the book at all. We also have, in this same potential award-winning piece of heterosexist propaganda, a character who is a stereotype foot-stomping feminist who turns out to be a Sick Lesbian who, after being scorned by the female protagonist, proceeds to cause the protagonist a shitload of trouble. I am told that Kate is actually very nice, and doesn't hate anyone in particular. If she does not hate lesbians, then perhaps all she needs is some education. Wilhelm, like most of her characters, is privileged, white, and hetero; consequently her expertise are [sic] toward supporting the classist, racist, heterosexist status quo. Chances are good that I'll never read another word of Wilhelm; good writing is not enough to make being insulted and denigrated worthwhile....

[I too just finished Wilhelm's *The Clewiston Test* and was intending to review it for Janus 9. However, you picked out exactly the same two uncomfortable aspects of the book that I wanted to point out and comment upon. I'm glad they glared for someone else: I was beginning to feel uneasy. I find it very strange that side by side in TCT with the major plot of a woman scientist choosing her work over what was becoming a degrading, destructive relationship with her husband, beside that unusual consciousness, these hints of bigoted heterosexual paranoia could exist. I wish someone would bring up questions about these—um—"motifs" in Wilhelm's writing in an interview sometime. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

...Jeanne's editorial never clarifies her point. I gather that she means (after pointing out that much SF dealing with women's equality suggests equality isn't possible so long as women must bear children) that equality can be achieved without biologically altering women, and SF should be more capable of depicting societies wherein this is shown. This is most certainly true. Bold as *The Female Man* and *The Left Hand of Darkness* are, both err in suggesting that woman and man, as existing in the present biological form, can never be equal. I don't think that's true, and in SF certainly it doesn't have to be true. The author who portrays a world that is non-sexist for our species is the potential prophet. I think some women are currently under a similar delusion that our freedom hinges on the birth-control pill and abortion; this, too, suggests we are inherently slaves and must overcome our biology and usurp natural order in order to be free. In this society we are oppressed by our biology, so birth control and abortion are possibly pivotal to equality. But this is the society that usurped the natural order, and it is not a healthy society. The Goddess knows that biology is not what oppresses us....

↪ [We also heard from Suzy McKee Charnas, C. C. Clingan, Ctein, Diane Duane, Gary Farber, Gil Gaier, Maurice Harter, Jeff Hecht, Clif Kranish, Serge Mailloux, Marge Piercy, Andy Porter, Jeff Schalles, John Thiel, Peter Werner, Laurine White, Susan Wood, and our bank.]





# WISCON REPORTS



MADISON, WIS.  
FEB. 11-13, 1977

## 1. Creative Tension BY PHILIP KAVENY

To me, the most valuable part of WisCon was the exchange of ideas and creative tension that I was able to experience as a result of my participation. The morning after the play, I had breakfast with Betty Hull, a drama teacher from Chicago. We started talking about the availability of materials for starting a film program in an educational institution. I offered a few suggestions and the conversation moved to the discussion of specific films.

Betty had read Jeanne Gomoll's review of "The Man who Fell to Earth." She felt that through Jeanne's sensitive treatment of the film, several levels of meaning that were previously obscure were made accessible to her. At this point I would like to state that because Jeanne had clarified in her article so much about her feelings on the subjects of art and creative vision, we two were able to define how we felt on these matters by taking different positions on her review. I told Betty that I thought Jeanne had written a good review about a lousy film. I did not agree with what she had said about the role of the artist with a different, isolated and politically superior vision to that of the masses of people. Suddenly Betty and I were glaring at each other across breakfast. We had hardly known each other fifteen minutes and already we were locked in a bond of creative dissonance. We forced each other into the position of having to define our respective contradictory positions towards the artistic and creative process. I think I told her that I wanted to move away from an elitist, self-satisfied approach to art. She asked me if I had ever read Kafka's short story "The Hunger Artist."

Briefly, this is a story about an artist whose medium of expression is the mortification of the flesh through fasting. Early in his career, the artist had drawn large crowds in all the major European capitals, but when fasting went out of favor, he became just part of a small side show, fasting away in an almost forgotten cage. The last fast ends with his death, but as he lays dying, he answers the queries of an admiring attendant with: "because I couldn't find the food I liked. If I had found it, believe me, I should have made no fuss and stuffed myself like you or anyone else." When he dies, the straw and filth are swept from his cage and he is replaced with a young panther.

Betty's mention of that particular story made my eyes light up. I said that reading "The Hunger Artist" had been part of my intellectual transformation, something which I had experienced fourteen years earlier at Stevens Point State College. I mentioned that the end of the story had caused me to think about innumerable philosophic and artistic questions, and that I had even defined some of my behavior during a particularly dark period in my early twenties through it.

Betty stopped me right there and she said she thought it was a bad story. Her reason? Fasting was simply not an appropriate medium of artistic expression and it could never be one. This statement led to a total breakdown in communication. She would not tell me what she thought important and appropriate mediums of expression were, saying only that certain things obviously were not. I found myself saying that any medium of artistic expression was potentially valid. Then I perhaps offended her by calling her an elitist. Communication ceased altogether as we got increasingly more hostile towards each other.

I can't say exactly what Betty felt, but I know I felt defensive because I had been drawn onto ground that I was very unsure of. I don't know what I was afraid of, but the feeling was certainly real. I think that Betty experienced the same feeling because we both broke off talking at the same time.

Though our conversation was not what I would describe as amiable, and I'm not sure we will ever speak again, I am grateful to her. The conversation which we shared dragged me to the edge of a thicket which I have avoided for a long time. I found that the more I tried to define my feelings about art, the role of the artist, and the creative process, the more entangled I became in my own fears, emotions and ego. Nevertheless I feel very dissatisfied with what I told her and almost compelled to articulate what I actually feel. I feel like poking around in that thicket now (I am inclined to call it an enchanted forest, but I don't like name dropping).

I have a friend who is a glass blower and a bus driver. I asked him if he had ever read "The Hunger Artist." He said he had not, but certainly would like to if he ever got a day off that he didn't use to work at the glass lab. Then he added that he didn't expect that to happen for the next couple of years. Another friend who is a photographer told me that creativity, design and composition are very different things. Further, he felt that design and composition were logical problems which could be solved through the application of appropriate mathematical tools. He then gave me ten books on the theory of design and told me to stop bothering him. My film teacher of several years ago told me to let that secret self which lay hidden, a stranger inside of me, act as my teacher. Thus through working I might become acquainted with those abilities which would lay dormant unless used. This is a beautiful concept as are others I could mention, but I keep wondering what it is that I think. I used to quote Karl Jung who

felt that any expression of the connection between the the inner and the outer world was valid. The question of quality was something entirely different, but that still doesn't tell me what I think.

If I stop expressing the thoughts of others as if they are my own, I find that I don't really have any opinions about the creative process. Somehow I feel that this is better than being encumbered with a huge black trash bag full of quotations which can be emptied, on cue, to fill up an article or conversation. And as I think about it longer, I suspect that there is something small left over after I have dropped my trusty and reliable trash bag.

What is left after this shedding process is simple and unpretentious and goes something like this: I like surprises and I like to surprise myself. This carries over into my feelings about creating art. Many times I find interesting and beautiful things in strange places. I have a weakness for bad novels, poetry, movies, as long as they lead me into areas I had not previously considered. I like to be seduced by a concept but I resist the kind of authority exerted by someone who feels that, through scholarship and criticism, he has gained a kind of ownership over someone else's work of art.

Several years ago a teacher in an introductory literature course told us that he knew James Joyce's mind, which was to say that he owned it and could pass on parts of it to we students who were incapable of recovering these parts ourselves. He told us that within twenty years accurate scholarship would tell us why King George III appeared in a certain scene sucking on a Juju Baby. Many years have passed and reports are his scholarship has not progressed to that end, thank God.

The final result of my interaction with Ms. Hull is not clear. I did develop the realization that my own aesthetic was almost non-existent. But, as of yet, I have not been able to develop some rigid yardstick with which to judge artistic value. Hopefully I never will.

ies half of us are wearing. One by one, the people in the play sneak away, leaving only a few committee members to fill the air with serious words about science fiction. Greg Rihn is going strong, but it is time to begin the play. Suddenly a hand appears and pulls him under the curtain, out of sight.

*Galactic Banana Dealer*, or *That's a Lot of Bananas* is a serious play about alternative societies, the effect of first contacts and the possibilities of advanced technology. Then why is the audience laughing so hard they miss half the lines (so do the actors), especially when Phil Kaveny makes his entrance in turkey sandwich costume? Fans are people in weird costumes dancing around to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw"? That can't be right.

Fans must be those people milling around at the open party, drinking and talking about science fiction. Katherine MacLean is throwing out ideas by the score, serious conversations about Robert Heinlein, the L-5 project and teaching science fiction are going on in every corner. Eventually the cash bar closes down and people go home to bed, so they can get up bright and early for the next day's program, right? Wait a minute—people are disappearing into the basement to watch movies (silent German films, *The Thing*, cartoons) pulling out guitars and singing, and the committee is giving a party and still talking, but not about science fiction. "What do you mean, all you have is Coke and RC cola!"

Surely those strange people in the play and at the parties last night aren't the serious Madison fans who edit journals like *Ozerist* and *Janus*? But there they are Saturday morning, sitting on panels discussing such issues as politics in science fiction, the validity of heroic fantasy as a form of literature, and the image of women in SF. By the end of the Saturday programming the bemused few who have stuck it out, trying to find out just what fandom is, are not surprised to hear the Fan Panel divide into two groups (fanzine fans and convention fans) and then prove that everyone on the panel falls in both camps. Saturday night these virgin readers have given up trying to understand fandom. They don't really know what *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is doing at a University-sponsored conference on science fiction, but they relax and enjoy it.

## 2. THE FANNISH SERCON CONVENTION BY LESLEIGH LUTTROLL



How do you explain fandom to a non-fan? "Well, it's sort of like a big family ... No ... There's all these people and they're all interested in the same thing and ... Well, not exactly. Oh, you know what I mean!" You can't really explain it; people just have to experience fans and fandom to understand them. Part of WisCon was providing this introduction for a lot of potential fans, and we did our best to give them an accurate picture.

MadSTF is a sercon group, or so people say, and there are a lot of academics and other serious people in the audience. So the opening ceremonies are very formal and correct. Sure—sitting on the edge of the stage in the Wisconsin Center theater we introduce ourselves and try to explain the propeller bean-

With a bit of a mind flip  
You're into the time ship  
Let's go to WisCon again! →

### THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART 3

The industrial revolution produced this water-powered beanie. However, it was only practical if you happened to be out in the rain.



GR

### 3. ...AND I REALLY LIKED THE MOVIES— BY GREG G. H. NHH

Just about everyone on the WisCon committee writes for *Janus*, and everyone on the *Janus* staff went to WisCon, so I suppose this issue of *Janus* will be inundated with con reports. Thus I've limited myself to discussing the things in which I was directly involved.

Films: Everyone was amazed at the amount of film programming we were able to put out, though I put that down to the marvelous resources we have in Madison, and the wonderful cooperation of everyone involved in procurement. I would like to extend a vote of thanks to Harry Wastrack, who heroically tended the projector through most of two long nights, and did very little else as a consequence. The Saturday night showing was the hit of the con, the mystery film *Crimes of Dr. Mabuse* leading off with many unintentional laughs, followed by the unbelievably schlocky *Little Shop of Horrors*, and an unexpected hit, *Protein Synthesis* (a living diagram done to music and poetry, with many elements of tribal ritual—you've got to see it to believe it). The modern short classic *The Dove* set the tone as the evening reached its peak with *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*—a filmed rock opera which in many ways bears comparison with *Jesus Christ Superstar*—certainly *JCS*'s equal, if not superior in camera-work and in acting. The plush sets are a bonus. The music is memorable, and at least on a par with *Godspell* if not *JCS*—far superior to current disco glop. The film is a visual treat, not least for the many sight gags taken from everything from *Frankenstein* to *Dr. Strangelove*. The story is something else. It serves as an adequate but utterly bizarre vehicle for the music—reason enough to be. Certain parties felt it a shame that so much work and love be lavished on such incredible events, ("I know queers, but no queer's that queer.") but I say, what you are doing, do well.. I was immensely pleased with Friday night's *Siegfried*, which is a beautiful movie, and to be recommended. *Chicamaugua* and *Occurence at Owl Creek Bridge* were overly obscure. *Historica Natura* was a sleeper, well recieved.

Panels: On the fantasy panel, Roger Schlobin and Richard West discussed the academic and formal aspects of fantasy, while while Jim Cox and myself defended the ideas, styles, plots, and characters we find valuable. Discussion included Tolkien, Lewis, Dunsany, Hodgson, Moorcock, Eddison, Clark Ashton Smith, Howard, Wagner, Gardner Fox, and Zelazny. A good time was had by all. This and other panels were taped for eventual airing on WHA's "Mindwebs" show.

The educational panel consisted of an informal information exchange on aspects of education, including why SF should be taught, useful themes and stories, and the starting of science fiction libraries. I was able to assist Richard Doxtator and Jim Blair in a very useful effort.

Religion panel: Again, a very free discussion after initial presentations by panelists Jim Cox, Diane Martin, and Jeff Bogstad, with a little factual fill-in by me, and much welcome comment from GoH Katherine MacLean to liven things up. Like most religious discussions, it got a bit thick at times, but then, most us enjoy a good wrangle now and then.

H. G. Wells multi-media: Philip Kaveny continues to fearlessly experiment in the field of science fiction criticism, exploring into areas of study and modes of presentation that are new to him. Although

there was considerable adverse criticism, this was from persons who did not fully comprehend the nature of the experiment. The mind that gave us "Kurt Vonnegut: His Optimism and Humanism from its Origins to its Disintegration," assures me that he will not be deterred from further experimentation.

*Galactic Banana Dealer*—brilliant, lively theater, well-performed, and scripted with a great science fiction sense of humor. I hear they have had several offers to perform it elsewhere, and such lauds are well deserved.

Con in general: A meaty, intensely programmed serious con, a bit light on fannish foolishness, but compensating with a mind-bogglingly tight organization. WisCon should be a sure repeat, and next time—even better. ●

### 4. GALACTIC BANANA DEALER PREPLAY BY H. L. ANON

Convention reports can begin to all look alike after a while, which is probably why some fans pretend that they don't enjoy reading them. Once I remember finding myself in a room party full of people who were confessed convention report writers. We agreed that it would be fun to write a group convention report, with each of us picking a specialized topic or area or theme. One woman spoke up right away to volunteer to report on the women's restrooms, which she said were very interesting at that particular hotel. Also, there would probably be lots of interesting gossip.



It's cool. He just wants to use the mirror...

That convention report was never written, at least not as it was envisioned at that party. But the concept of a group review remains fascinating, and for the WisCon I'd like to volunteer to cover the women's restrooms.

Actually, I want to explain the slightly ill-tempered exchange you might have seen just outside a large women's restroom near the auditorium in Wisconsin Center, Friday night just before our play, *Galactic Banana Dealer*.

The restroom had a nice big lounge with good lighting and mirrors, and was of course the proper place for members of the cast to be made-up. Grease paint was applied and powder and sparkles were flying, when up pops the voice of authority, saying that the men must leave. It was a good thing that we weren't completely into character yet, or we might not have put up with being kicked out like that.

### 5. THE COCHAIRPERSON DISAVOWS ANY RESPONSIBILITY BY DOUG PRICE

The first WisCon was apparently a rousing success. I still get compliments on how well the con turned out. However, I wish to disavow any but the most peripheral responsibility for the way that WisCon was organized. The various members of MadSTF each did their jobs so well that there was little for me to do but watch the con fall together by itself. Besides members of the con committee, I think a few thank-yous are in order. I'd like to thank Scott Imes, and especially Dave Mruz of Minneapolis fandom for bringing along some fine examples from his collection of animated films to share with us, and Milwaukee fandom, who turned out en masse to be generous.

MADISON, WISC  
ALSO SHOWING  
WIZARDS  
all this and WISCON too



A number of lucky (and unlucky) occurrences punctuated WisCon. The snow which had put some what of a damper on ConFusion bolstered WisCon's attendance figure to approximately 250. The movie *Wizards*, in a pre-release, opened only two blocks away in time for the con. Indeed, a number of artists disappeared Friday evening to see it. There was a problem with room parties, however. The concrete and steel walls of Lowell Hall conducted noise all too well. I might note that we are looking into the possibility of using the Madison Inn as the con hotel next year. Yes, it looks like there will be a WisCon 2 (various deities preserve us). At present, we are querying our choice for GoH.

We all had fun doing WisCon, and invite you to come next year, and meet the deities of Madtown.

### 6. UNSCHEDULED EVENTS BY LYNNE MORSE

WisCon happened to be my first convention, SF or otherwise, so I didn't really know what to expect. I liked the con a lot (especially after someone said to me, "You're the most promising neo I've ever seen.") I'll tell you about my favorite, unscheduled event.

In the hucksters' room, I ran across a table with Star Trek T-shirts with witty sayings. (Note: I'm a trekker, not a trekkie. There's a difference). For a while I bargained with a stranger about whether we should buy our shirts together. That way we'd save 50¢ a piece (\$3 per shirt, \$5 for two of them). We did this in front of the guy who was selling the shirts, and he did everything except pull a knife out to keep us from doing such a thing. Finally, I bought two (!) shirts, then went upstairs to a panel discussion.

I sat down next to some friends of mine and listened to the discussion with half an ear while rummaging through my purse to see how much I could afford to spend on lunch, when I received one of the rudest awakenings. I had 50¢ left, and it was only Saturday noon! Fifty cents is enough for three bus trips (and 5¢ left over). If I were to eat at home, I would need more than that to get from WisCon to my house and back again. I left the discussion room as quietly and as politely as possible, then ran to the hucksters' room. It must've been 12:30, and the room was nearly deserted. I decided I would return one of the shirts for \$2, so I went over to the table where I'd bought them earlier and explained my problem. I ended with something like, "If I don't return a shirt, I'll starve." "Don't starve," said the same person I'd bargained in front of earlier. He handed me \$2, but when I tried to return the shirt...no, he wouldn't hear of it. Nice guy! Needless to say, I thanked him a lot. He asked me not to tell people about the incident and connect his name with it, though.

Still, that was one of the nicest things that happened to me, period. Maybe I'll bump into him at another con and pay him back.

### 7. MEMOIRS OF A WISCONITE BY JIM COX

Four in the morning. Two bearded guys wearing bright red propeller beanies are sitting in the lounge of Lowell Hall. The glassy-eyed fellow at the piano, me sagging in a chair next to him. Dick Russell and Jim Cox stoned out of their minds on sheer fatigue and singing every cowboy song they can remember.

I'm at the registration desk Friday noon. I'm telling this lady all about our GoH. I look down at her name tag five minutes into the spiel. Her name tag says "Katherine MacLean."

The con committee introducing ourselves to the convention. I stand up and modestly announce at the top of my lungs, from the height of my ego, that I am the Token Atheist on the SF & Religion panel, the Token Sword & Sorcery Buff on the Fantasy panel, and the Token Trekker on the WisCon committee. Whereupon there is a burst of applause from an enthusiastic minority scattered round the room—and the next day we have an impromptu Star Trek panel in the hallway and a couple dozen people drop in.



I meet Lucy & Lynne & Carol & George & Martin & Bob & masses, herds, whole congregations of folks.

Planning to return home every night. Ending up sacking out in room 207 standing guard over our hoard of soda pop. Didn't make it home to the wife and kid for three days. Underwear a little ripe. But the soul and spirit never felt better.

A triumph for Conan the Cimmerian and nubile maidens on the fantasy panel. Rousing audience participation in our religion panel. My Ghod! They're video-taping me! I'm going to be immortal in some WHA tape vault!

I'm an art auctioneer! Now who bid what? I'm better at the patter than the math. Who'll bid on this fabulous, fecund Phil Foglio? I bid adieu myself.

Three days later the WisCon committee all gather at Nick's bar & Grill for the post mortem. It comes my turn to speak.

"Do we have to wait a whole year before we get to do it again?"

People, there were cheers mingled with the moans. And that's what fandom's all about.



## 8. ROLL OVER ASIMOV BY THOMAS J. MURN

The "Contemporary SF" discussion was held late Sunday afternoon, when many fans were taking leave of Marvelous Madtown, and was poorly attended as a result. Some expected discussers were also no-shows, and the time was spent in a rather dissolute discussion of exactly what constituted serious SF. Katherine MacLean persisted in arguing for a conception of written SF in which the "idea" was the central, yea, primary component. By "idea" Ms. MacLean meant the scientific trick or speculation — time travel, FTL drive or whatever — which SF stories were, in days of yore, built around. Your moderator valiantly tried to explain the consequences of this conception which would, in serious circles, detract from the solvency of our art form; remember the villain stereotypes? The mindless muscle heros? The helpless women? People in the 1970's are trying to adapt to a rapidly-changing world...SF may be able to help them cope by showing them examples of

people dealing with changes—and cardboard people make for poor lessons. Ms. MacLean, however, refused to budge from her statements about the "idea" in SF and, as a corollary, stated that *Dhalgren* was not science fiction in the true sense.

The discussion continued at a lively pace, with other WisConers taking positions on one side or the other of the obvious split of opinion between your moderator and Ms. MacLean. So, the contemporary discussion went: despite fem/humanism, the disjuncture between the established forms and structures and the rising mutations. Roll over, Asimov!

## 9. MEMOIRS OF A SURVIVOR BY JEANNE GOMOLL

Having once seen a convention from the peculiar vantage point of one of the con committee members, I don't think I'll ever go to another convention with quite the same, uh, innocence as I did before WisCon. It's sort of like a small child who sees the world as both a very complex place (in terms of their lack of understanding of it) and, at the same time, an almost magically, effortlessly mechanized machine. Now I know about the slaves who pour sweat and adrenalin into the machine of conventions and make them work. Now I'll always be aware of the stage crew.

But as I mentioned before, the point of view of a con committee person is a peculiar one, and this is so mainly because as a con committee person, one never gets to see or participate in much of the con. So why, you may well ask, are we, the con committee, writing con reports?? Well, we figure if we all describe the part(s) we did see, we might find out what actually happened, you see...

I have memories of the day before the con, the night before especially, dress rehearsal play practice, "coloring" the monstrous corrugated cardboard machine with dials and knobs and meters and coke dispenser and radioactive signs and little labels for the actors to find and read during the play. The stage filling with the smell of felt tip as the actors scurried around me, and then, fending off two little six-year-old groupies who were either awed by my skill with magic markers or by the machine. I let them think it worked, but would cause allergies for chocolate if they got too near. Then, after practice, the lights went on and as if by magic, since an audience had filled up the theater during the play (refugees of another convention), there was great and unexpected applause. Katherine MacLean, our Guest of Honor, had arrived too, and the weekend had begun in a tremendously exhilarating manner.

Katie suggested one or two major changes in the play, but was tactfully detoured by the director, Demmie McGinley. Katie's enthusiasm, though, sometimes enough to make one feel that one was running a race, so wonderfully fast and furious flowed her energy and ideas, was ever-present during the con. The next morning, Friday, I had lunch with her and sat watching her read my review of *The Missing Man* (in *Janus* 7). When I use the word "nervous" now, I think of those moments as she scanned the paragraphs through the bottom part of her glasses, glancing up every once in a while with a comment or argument. I could't remember what I'd written and laughed far too much, I thought. I like her: Katherine MacLean is an exhilarating, friendly person.

Most of all there were the people and friends who came to the convention that stand out clearly in my memory. Talking to Amanda Bankier especially, and some wonderful people I am beginning to know through the Women's APA (Janet Small, OE), was wonderful.

However, the part of the convention I should know best and be able to write most about fluently is the Feminism and SF panel which Jan and I planned and participated in. Ironically, though, it's the memory of that panel that has actually prevented me from doing any writing of con reports since WisCon in mid-February...

I am one of those people whose particular neurosis it is (and an enviable one at that, or so I've been told by some who say that if you have to have one, it's much preferred over its opposite)—that I invariably doubt myself, am positive of any enterprise of mine's failure—after the thing is done. The paper written in a frenzy of self-assured brilliance and eagerness, once handed in, is suddenly realized to be pure bullshit, unadulterated egoism, etc. The resume seems to convey nothing of value after it is sealed and mailed off to a prospective employer. And on and on... Admittedly, it's better than worrying while doing a thing, but—

Most of the time my worries, at least in their drastic forms (they'll flunk me, they'll realize I'm a fake) never materialize. But I never seem to learn from this familiar sequence of event and reaction. And so I avoided the tapes of the WisCon feminist panel for a month, growing more and more assured that I should never have attempted the thing in the first place, telling myself that I can't express myself clearly or interestingly in public forums, and becoming more and more uncomfortable at the prospect of having to write about these rotting memories in *Janus*, and the promised article for *Corr* (ed., Perri Corrick). I did finally listen to the tapes at the insistence of Phil Kaveny, though, and a good thing it was, or I may never have been able to write about it.

There were five of us participating on the feminist SF panel: Mary Badami, Jan Bogstad, Amanda Bankier, Katherine MacLean and myself. The panel was set up to try to cover various fields of knowledge and describe how various changes within those fields (of theory, assumptions, structure, developments, etc.) had resulted from feminist awareness and could be applied to the writing of science fiction. For instance, the new theories about matriarchies developing in anthropology, or the new ideas about the goddess religions being brought up in archeology (respectively in Evelyn Reed's *Women's Evolution* and Merlin Stone's *When God was a Woman*). Those were some of the topics I touched upon.

Mary Badami spoke first, following my short introduction, and she spoke wonderfully. She began from a personal perspective, speaking about the effect SF had on her in her youth, saying that it had been an emancipating aspect, working against the development of racism, working for a healthy attitude toward change, she said. I felt very close to her as she talked about feeling as if she lived two lives, though: one in SF and one as a feminist, and how she felt the need to connect the two now. Badami said she feels that SF is a literature in a culture, of a culture, and responsible for changing ideas. This she especially related to the problems of sex roles in society.

I spoke next. You've read a lot of what I said: about what I think is the function of SF for me as a feminist (see, "And Failing That, Invent," *Janus* 7), and about Evelyn Reed's *Women's Evolution*. I haven't mentioned Merlin Stone's *When God was a Woman*, though.



It is a great book: taking up the problem of the ignored/belittled importance of the pre-male god religions that accompanied the matriarchies. It is Stone's thesis that the ancient goddess religions (once just as wide spread and influential as the later male-oriented religions, but relegated in status to mere "cults" instead of religions) were perverted by the patriarchal cultures that militarily conquered matriarchal ones in order to solidify their power. In other words, a male-oriented culture that conquered a female-oriented culture would bring about the death, rape, or marriage of the goddess by their god in order to "justify" the new god's claim to the people in that area. Her theory is well documented and very convincing. Her explanations of the *Bible's* many anti-female statements (admonishing only women to be faithful to one man, their husbands, etc.) are shown to be laws made by a determined patriarchal culture. For in order to maintain paternal inheritance, female promiscuity had to be totally eliminated. She ends her book with a discussion of the Adam and Eve myth as an extension of all these things. I found it a fascinating book, and recommend it highly. Even though it is very academic at times (you think *Janus* is sercon...), I read it as if it were a novel.

As to these ideas' application to SF, which was the purpose of the panel, I think it is fairly clear that if we know our past to be more than an ironclad domination of men and male-oriented cultures and philosophies, a future of different possibilities will be easier to imagine and to bring about. But I've said all this before here: So I will spare you.

Jan spoke next, in similar terms about linguistics, citing Casey Miller and Kate Swift's *Words and Women*, and Robin Lakoff's *Language and Women's Place*. She talked about how new words can be used in SF to reveal an equitable society and also to jog our minds about the conception we have about ours. She mentioned, for instance, Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* and the use of a nonsexist language in that book, and of Suzy McKee Charnas' *Walk to the End of the World*, citing the derogatory women-words in that book that emphasized and realistically were portrayed as further brutalizing the women.

She also spoke of new developments and ideas in political theory and economic fields. I don't feel capable of discussing those things here; in any case, she speaks or writes for herself on these topics editorially, elsewhere in this issue of *Janus*.

Amanda spoke next of the field of psychology, bringing up the studies done with therapists which revealed that mental "health" and healthy men are

judged with one standard, while women and unhealthy, neurotic people were judged by another. Among the several fascinating ideas that she brought up with regard to their possible application in SF, Amanda also spoke of the current controversy surrounding women and mathematics-learning, called "math panic."

Katherine spoke next. As I said before, she is an intense, talkative, witty and enjoyable person. Listening to her is like listening to some incredible idea machine spewing out story plots and things she has read in recent scientific journals and sometimes strange philosophies, and humorous/argumentative cracks. This is how she spoke at the GoH speech and on the feminist panel. Some people were offended by the things she said on the panel. But as she herself said, she loved to throw out ideas simply for the sake of argument, and I think that's what happened there. Some of her comments could be taken as sexist. She is not a feminist in conscious terms, though she is a strong and independent woman in her personal life, I think. And neither is she sexist in the way she interacts with others or writes. It is simply, I think, that she has never felt a crisis that has forced her to think out ideas on sexual roles. The ideas she spewed at the panel were not convictions, but extraordinary ideas that were quite effective in that, indeed, she most certainly got people arguing.

After Katie, Mary spoke again, summing up things with a statement that the important questions of the day, including those brought up by feminists, must be reflected in SF in order for SF to remain an exciting and dynamic literature.

A great deal of discussion following the panel centered on Katie's comments. While I think the panel was on the whole successful, Jan and I have subsequently decided that it is too bad that discussion groups following the panel couldn't have divided up according to topics. In this way the many ideas that were brought up and responded to a limited degree by the audience, could have been more intensely discussed by those interested. We hope to suggest a procedure of this sort for the feminist panel at SunCon.

The convention all together was a great success from my warped and distorted viewpoint as a committee person. Everything started on time, a thing we didn't realize until afterwards was not done in SF cons. (...We'll try to improve in that area next year.) And the play and the films were just great. I thought. But, actually, I'm a little relieved it's over.

## 10. CONFESSIONS OF A CO-CHAIRPERSON AS A PANELIST BY JANICE BOGSTAD

In many ways, WisCon was a very disconcerting experience. It was the first large gathering that I had ever been involved in organizing, and the first time I was responsible for, and to, a large group of people as well as to the institutions involved in putting on the convention. When we first undertook the convention, I was just not aware of the sheer magnitude of the work involved, so I did some rather silly things. First, I volunteered to be the MadSTF/UW Extension contact, which in effect made me a con co-chairperson. Second, I got a part in a play.

Third, I volunteered for not one but two panel discussions. The feminist panel was something Jeanne and I had been planning for a long time, but the politics panel was organized at the last minute when I saw the chance to combine school work, my own individual interests, and my political philosophy.

Now, disconcerting experiences can be uncomfortable, as were some aspects of both the panels on which I served. For example, I don't feel that I was quite prepared to serve either as a participant or as a moderator on the panels. Thus I found them both to be extremely painful experiences at the time. I think that this was unfortunate, because they could have been a lot more fun and a lot more creative if I had been willing to argue with other speakers and with the audience at certain crucial points. This came out especially on the feminist panel. Hopefully next time I will be a bit more feisty.

Now the other side of disconcerting experiences is the creative one. I may have been uncomfortable on those panels, but I still recognized that some very interesting things were happening on each of them. For example, Tom Moylan's synthesis of the possible areas of investigation concerning the relationship between science fiction, or literature in general, and society, was especially impressive to me, as I have been groping for such a synthesis as long as I have been criticizing literature. He really made the politics panel for me. I also felt that the skeptical positions taken by Sam Saciliano and Jennifer Bankier concerning the emancipatory possibilities of SF were essential to maintaining the critical balance the panel needed. As for the feminist panel, which impressed me even more (probably partly because I was awake by then), I found several remarks both excited me and opened up several new lines of thought that I have subsequently pursued at my leisure. I remember Mary Badami's remarks most vividly. I was especially glad she could so effectively say many things that I have wanted to articulate but have been unable to. A couple of things which I found the most helpful concerned the formation of a personal identity. First, she discussed the difference between sex and gender, the first being a physical distinction and the second a societal one. That



such things as one's possible occupational options, one's image of personal power, and even the assessment of one's sanity (something which Jeanne also discussed) can depend very much on what one particular society decides is normal at one particular time is frightening but nonetheless the case. The fact that these decisions seem to be largely made without regard to sex pinpoints the difference between sex and gen-

der. Now this becomes a very provocative idea, on several levels, when applied to SF. For example, the almost-myth that only adolescent boys read science fiction has led to an entire editorial practice both because editors considered their audience to be boys and because they conceived of them as "healthy young boys" of middle-class America. This conception became a proscription, preventing the publication of a lot of work that was considered to be unsuitable. Luckily, what I see as the best qualities of SF often

make it appeal to young women as well as young men. Because it looks to a future, a place where we as readers are not, it becomes instrumental in forming our conceptions and hence our actions in bringing about our own personal futures. And this future does not necessarily (although it often did in effect) make the equation between sex and gender in quite the same way as it is presently made in 20th Century America. On another level, I have been realizing that recently SF editors are increasingly willing to deal with books which posit a totally different equation, first because they are willing to publish books written by women (and because women are writing such books) and second because they will publish books which include women and men who deal with each other and with their lifestyles in a way that is not yet tolerated in America. Thus the possibility of looking toward social evolution as engendered by different economic conditions has become admissible in SF in contrast to a previous concentration on biological evolution.

It seems to me that people of Ms. MacLean's generation of SF writers, and by this I mean people who began writing or did their earlier work in the 40s or 50s, look almost exclusively at what could be defined as scientific, and, in her case, biological or technological, factors which form a new or different society. This was the sort of extrapolation from which she spoke both on the feminist panel and at the Saturday-evening gathering. Ideally, some future SF novel will be able to put these two kinds of extrapolations together to give us alternate viable pictures of social and biological evolution which can take place in our future.

This brings us to yet another provocative aspect of Mary's portion of the panel. She brought up a question which she had found, I think, in an SF novel. A character says something like: "Yes, now I'm free, but tell me, what am I free to be?"

Even if SF can offer us a look at possible futures, or even possible different views of ourselves as human beings and as men and women, we must still deal with the strictures of our society. We may attain inner freedom and strength of character, but the fact of the matter is that this will not automatically open up all areas of endeavor to those of us who have been excluded from them in the past. The example of this problem which affected me most immediately was the reaction to our feminist-oriented convention.

Some gentlemen that I talked to said that they hadn't originally thought that a feminist-oriented convention was necessary, first because they didn't see that other conventions had really excluded women's interests, especially in the recent past. Secondly, they didn't realize that there was still a problem of discrimination against women in our society, especially in academic and professional circles, which are what most of us can speak about. The first objection is falsified by the fact that so very many men objected to a feminist-oriented convention so vehemently. Now WisCon had one panel on women and science fiction. All of the others dealt with topics of general interest. We had a female guest of honor and fan guest of honor. Well, the Australia WorldCon had a female guest of honor. So, the folks who were not interested in feminism, in women in science fiction, had only to stay away from that one panel.

There was plenty of other activity to keep them busy. The strong negative reactions to the concept of a feminist-oriented convention were thus not to the practice at the convention, though some protested that they felt "left out". I think they were rather gut-level reactions to anyone spending time on women for a change. So it goes, and so will next year go. We can promise a multitude of activities, but I predict that Madison will continue to weight its convention toward women's interests. After all, one such convention in all of fandom is surely not too much.

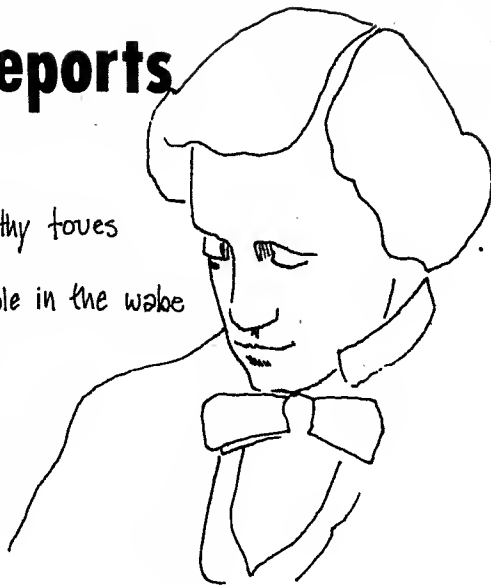
Now to the second objection. On Sunday afternoon I talked with a fellow who had come both to the feminist panel and to the discussions afterward. He mentioned that he had not realized how ingrained, and at times very subtle, the mechanisms for the repression of women in this society had become. He found our explanations of how we are affected at the level of our basic development by the way we are handled, talked to, by the things that are expected of us, to be very illuminating. He especially mentioned things that happen to women at the university graduate level where they become the most easily identifiable. But these are also the sorts of things that hamper one's self-confidence all along one's educational process. For example, it has been demonstrated that, if a teacher doesn't think you can learn something, chances are that you won't learn it. Hence the Math Panic that Jeanne mentioned in reference to high-school girls. And if you know things, as a teacher, in a certain way, you can come to mistake your bias for knowledge itself, seeking as a teacher to reproduce that bias in your students. This extends even to appropriate classroom behavior. Now women are taught to be less aggressive than men. You can see where this will affect their class behavior. If one is making an argument and can't be sufficiently aggressive about it, the argument is likely to be discounted. So, a woman has trouble making such an argument. On the other hand, as a woman, one must not be aggressive: it is not appropriate behavior. So any woman who actively pursues an education, especially at the highly competitive later levels, is suspect from the beginning. I would like to see us question not only women's place in such institutions as the educational system, but the whole idea of education as a competitive endeavor. Just as I feel we need not make the equation between physical sex and any set of prescribed duties associated with that sex, I also see no need for the equation presently made between intellectual acumen, brilliance, creativity, and competitiveness. Lord knows, only those who are interested in a field go into it in the first place. They should be judged on their competence, not on their brassiness.

In any case, you can see how the panel itself, and reaction to the panel, as well as to the convention as a whole, were both uncomfortable for me and also ultimately creative. The flow of new ideas, or new ways of organizing ideas, is what I prized most highly about my convention experience. I know I shall be able to look on SF with a new set of insights in the future and that I will be able to look forward to one feminist-oriented convention next year.

The whole experience prepared me for several important events on my life, in the last analysis. First, I got used to dealing with dissenters, an essential lesson when it came to my departmental exams this spring. Second, I got used to speaking before a large group of people. Now that the shock of said experience has worn off, I can see distinct advantages to such a format. Hopefully I can use it better in the future. And I'll get that chance this August, at the Miami WorldCon. SF and SF fandom are definite paths toward self-actualization of the sort necessary to individual action against a repressive but potentially changeable reality.



# Minicon reports



'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe

## 1. BY GREG RINN

Minnesota fandom managed to bring off a very successful 12th con Easter weekend at the Hotel Leamington in Minneapolis. Events broke down as follows:

Films: Dave Mruz put on a very nice film program almost single-handedly, drawing on his broad access to many rare and unusual animated features. Especially memorable were *Duck Dodgers in the 24<sup>th</sup> Century*, *Neverwhere*, *Quasi at the Quackadero*, and the beautiful *Peace on Earth*. Warner Brother's *Porky in Wackyland*, about dodo hunting, was a natural for this con. Unfortunately, the program's new feature, *Everything You Know is Wrong* (Firesign Theater), was a disappointment and reminded me why I never listen to Firesign Theater. Most of this group's humor is verbal, but their sound recordings and radio broadcasts are consistently muddy, blurred and chaotic. The soundtrack of this film was no exception, and combined with typically poor movieroom listening conditions, turned what might have been a halfway good spoof of those stupid pseudoscientific movies into a four-alarm headache that I couldn't stand to sit all the way through. It is unfortunate that a group that has been around as long as Firesign Theater cannot be troubled to match the technical quality of The National Lampoon Half-Hour Radio Hour or Dudley Riggs' Brave New Workshop. However, that was no fault of the con committee. What they might have done to improve the film program would have been to provide an additional projectionist or two for Mruz, who by the end of things Sunday morning looked like a man who'd been dragged through a knothole.

Panels: A slow start here, but things improved as they went along. The humor in SF panel fumbled and floundered, going aground on the panelists' lack of preparation (except for Buck Coulson, whose examples of unintentional humor in old stories kept the thing going). Gordon Dickson and Joe Haldeman made a mighty effort to be entertaining, the funniest

thing on the whole program being when Joe was dragged on stage by two of "Haldeman's Sex Commandos." If the fan members of the panel had taken the time to do a little research on their own, the panel might have taken fire; as it was, it fizzled.

The debate on education and science fiction between Ivor Rogers and Lester Del Rey turned out to be more of a general agreement, but gave a number of interesting insights into SF and education as viewed by a teacher and as viewed by a pro.

The panel on construction of aliens was the high point of the discussion period, as Haldeman, Dickson, Clifford Simak, Juanita Coulson and Ruth Berman (plus some lively kibitzing from Lester Del Rey) did what comes naturally. The panel ran over time, but could have gone on all day and night as far as most of the audience was concerned. It was fascinating.

Banquet: GoH speeches by the Coulsons and Ben Bova, and toastmaster chatter by Joe Haldeman were brief, pleasant and unremarkable. Food was fair but overpriced. Service was curt and somewhat surly. I was given to understand that the banquet was one of the hotel's conditions for giving student rates. This is not too onerous, but I fear that attendance at these banquets may continue to drop off in the future.

Play: It is easy to see why MiniCon dramas are famous. *Midwest Side Story* was brilliant, with an excellent parody of the *West Side Story* plot, lively dialog, fabulous lyrics, great staging on a simple set, fair acting, and some really good voices, especially in the roles of Maria and Anita. Honors for best supporting actor go to Gordon Dickson, for his portrayal of Ben Bova that stopped the show. What else can I say, but FAN-tastic?

Fred Haskell: An excellent presentation of some good music. I and some others who had not seen Haskell before were surprised that his show was not science-fictional in nature, but not disappointed with it in the least. (Note: Haskell suggested that he might add some men to his slide show to balance the sizeable number of female nudes. The egalitarian audience approved.)



Parties, etc: I don't know where the rumor that a con is not a con unless there are numerous drunken orgies grew up. Although a good deal of MiniCon blog got soaked up, most of the behavior I observed was quite decorous. In fact, on Friday night at the con suite, a number of fans amused themselves innocently for hours playing volleyball/soccer with an inflated ballon, while others wrangled over fannish topics of argument. MiniCon in general was a very polite and pleasant con, well worth repeating.



## 2. MINICON: There are many ways to enjoy a convention BY JANICE BOGSTAD

Because I am a student and because MiniCon occurs at the time of the school year that it does, I always have a paper to finish when I head off for

good old Minneapolis. At last year's convention I was contemplating a paper on Dante, and this time I had two to worry over, one on William Carlos Williams and one on the two earliest Chinese literary texts, the *Book of History* and the *Book of Poetry*. I must say, the con worked its charms on me again this year. I didn't do the papers there, of course, but I did return to Madison with enough peace of mind to finish the most important one and as a consequence gain entry into a Ph.D. program in Comparative Literature and Chinese. Again, I can't trace all my success in this endeavor back to the convention, but it certainly provided me with the sense of detachment I needed to "carry on," shall we say?

So, while I was contemplating school work at MiniCon—my own particular preoccupation (or neurosis)—I was also able to enjoy the many scheduled and many more non-scheduled events for which SF cons are famous. Like finding myself out walking on the hotel roof Saturday night, or swapping balloons and book titles with Bev DeWeese, or being put down by Alan Nourse (I guess I don't like his books that much anyway. [Now Jan, let's not be petty. {Why not?}]), or reading a Chinese ten dollar bill in the hucksters' room.

I guess one of my most prized memories is of my watching *Fantasia*, a surprise film presentation, from 2 to 4 am, Sunday morning. It was all I could do to stay awake through the whole thing. In fact, I fell asleep between parts one and two.

Of course, I knew there were scheduled programs, but it seemed I was either "out shopping, with no money", "out eating", or "out of it."

There are many ways to enjoy a convention.



## Editorial Continued From Page 5

The WisCon panel again left me with several notions of the possible articulations between science fiction and political actions, and between SF and our own socio-economic system. I found it helpful in so far as the various panel members and audience members added, with their comments and objections, to my own understanding of both the problems of delineating these articulations and the problems of evaluating the potential of SF to change people's ways of looking at the world around them and hence cause them to bring another world into being. Philip K. Dick has written about the forces of entropy which he sees as the most overriding danger to the continuance of humankind. I agree with him that there is a force in operation in the world community which is tending toward stagnation, but I don't want to couch this force in such potentially mystifying terms. It is not some metaphysical entropy but rather the mechanisms of advanced capitalism which strive to maintain the status quo, which includes a steady increase in corporate profits, in the face of dwindling human and natural resources. This, I think, is the entropy which is inimical to human life, and SF is the only place where such problems as the possible eventual result of our society's contradictions have been discussed and attempts made at solutions. I know it seems idealistic to think that SF will have any effect on the "real world out there", but listen folks,

we are part of the real world. We live in it every day and by our mere existence we either perpetuate or change the socio-economic order. I know that reading SF, in combination with my other experiences, has caused me to ask some very basic questions about why the lives of so many people are twisted or destroyed in the 20th Century world. We don't seem to be looking to any hopeful future. One thing you have to say at least for the Chinese and the Cubans is that they are building for something they hope to achieve in the future. But it is part of the process which maintains advanced capitalism that it must first deny the possibility of anything ever being different than it is now. We, even as lower middle class and middle class generation must face the disintegration of liberal capitalism as if it is our own responsibility, rather than the inevitable result of monopoly capitalism. Well, I say that SF, if carefully used, can help us to change that eventuality. It can both help us to identify the problems with creating a truly human existence in the wake of monopoly capitalism, and it can help us to identify the problems in advanced capitalism that can bring about its downfall either disastrously, in the form of fascism, or with the proper degree of care and guidance, into a more humanly-oriented world order.

# ROUND 2

## REACTIONS TO "Lunch & Talk" (JANUS, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 23)

M.Z. Bradley, J. Russ, W. Breen,  
J. A. Salmonson, G. Fergus

[In the December 1976 issue of Janus (Vol. 2 No. 4), Jan and I published the transcript of a conversation held among four women at the World Science Fiction Convention at Kansas City in September 1976. The four people involved were Suzy McKee Charnas, Amanda Bankier, Jan, and me. Since that article was printed, we have received more comment on it than we have for any other single article, review, or story. To avoid repetition and make some gesture toward economy in the printing of Janus, we have spared you a myriad of comments with regard to how provocative/impressive and/or tiresome/stupid was the "conversation". However, we are still left with a hefty stack of letters that we do not want to hide among the other LoCs (or, rather, obscure the other LoCs with their extensiveness). Thus: this special comment section. There are some important things said here, some outrageous and provocative things too. Jan and I excuse ourselves from commenting lest we protest too much. (I excuse myself because my role in the "conversation" was that of interviewer and microphone holder, and listener. I'm afraid I haven't even read MZB's books, and so my observations were then and are now unspoken, since irrelevant.) —JEANNE GOMOLLJ

### MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY

Nobody likes to be talked about behind her back, and you seem to have spent a considerable amount of time hashing me over when I wasn't there to protect myself. Of course, no one who writes for publication is immune to criticism. What bothers me is that no one bothered to ask if I had anything to say about any of this, and no one gives me credit for any kind of integrity.

Say what you will about writing for commercial publication; I have, virtually singlehanded, opened the largest market in science fiction, DAW Books, up to discussions of the new liberalism. Donald Wollheim began this decade with a mind firmly closed to a lot of the new ideas, including any kind of discussion of homosexuality. It was my strong insistence on being allowed to handle this in my own way, in *World Wreckers*, which proved to him that frank discussion of these matters would not cause outraged people all over the country to write in and say, "You can't sell your dirty old books in my nice clean Middle American drugstore." And step by step I have been working with other matters I consider important.

It is true that I first began thinking of *Shattered Chain* in terms of lesbianism. Now, however, I realize that my instincts were right in avoiding it. A letter from Don Wollheim said nervously (about *Forbidden Tower*, which deals with multiple marriage) that "we got away with handling homosexuality in *Heritage of Hastur* and we managed to deal with radical feminism in *Shattered Chain*, so maybe we will get away with this one too." This is WHERE THE SOCIETY IS! Wollheim and other publishers think of *Shattered Chain* as Radical Feminist. I have been attacked in various fanzines for writing "radical polemic, not fiction." I refer to Ian Covell's "The Shattered Dream", a review he recently sent me, and to "Science Fiction as Feminist Polemic", a review which appeared in a Utah fanzine which I have, alas, just sent off for Xeroxing and cannot quote chapter and verse.

But look here. Suppose I had written of a lesbian affair between Magda and Jaelle. The women who read the book would immediately snap out of any kind of identification with either woman's confusion, rebellion, awareness of her "invisible chains" of which Jaelle (her game with the ribbon) was becoming aware. They could immediately say to themselves, "Oh, Bradley isn't talking about me. She is talking about lesbians; I don't have to stop and re-evaluate all

the costs and penalties of either kind of life; this is just written about somebody else, lesbians, a kind of woman I don't know and don't want to know."

It would also mean that people would immediately jump to the conclusion that "only lesbians can be loyal to one another that way, not the majority of women." Whereas I want to bring out women's awareness that these problems are for all women—not just for a special class of women self-defined as lesbians.

I will not take the easy way—let me repeat that in a loud voice: I WILL NOT TAKE THE EASY WAY—of writing dream-fantasies, wish-fulfillments for women and feminists and lesbians, where we share a "wonderful dreamworld where all the men have gone away and dropped dead and we have the world all to ourselves." The men are there; they are here. Like it or not, we are living in a world that men have made, and that we have made by letting them make it. So, like it or not, we must live in that world, and conquer it.

Women are beginning to chide science fiction for providing no more than wet dreams for young male adolescents, dreams of power and violence and pliable women. But now you chide me for not providing wet dreams for separatists/lesbians/feminists, daydreams of strong powerful women, free of male chains? No, and no.

I am going to write about women as I see them, confused, resentful, struggling, imperfectly knowing themselves. Even as you and I. I identify with Rohana because I, too, committed myself to one world before I was old enough to know what I was doing; and I stated her case eloquently because it was the way I understood myself where I was when I wrote Shattered Chain. Trying to get inside Jaelle's head would have been—then—a fake.

Like Jaelle, I long for a day when all women will have freedom as of right, not by "renunciation and revolt." But I recognize that day isn't here yet, and I am not going to give in to the temptation to pretend, even in my novels, that it is here. The Free Amazons are not a perfect society. They are an expression of rebellion in a society, and some day I may explore it from the inside. But I write where we are, not where we want to be. Science fiction's business is to ask questions, not to provide wish-fulfillment answers where all the problems go away and the women can sit and dream, "Oh, gee, wouldn't it be wonderful if we had this...."

People love Darkover because they think "If only..." and "Here is a society the way it should be..." and then they get mad as hell when it doesn't prove to be a perfect society, but is bad and good at once, like all societies. In short, because I try to be honest about what I think really would, and will, happen, instead of what I personally might like to have happen!

And I am also sick and tired of having people think that being bisexual is somehow having the best of both worlds, that my marriage is some kind of "protection". Christ, no! It simply means I get flack from both sides, being accused of "playing around". At this period in my personal history I would give all I own, including the royalties on every book I have ever written or will ever write, to be able honestly to identify myself as either homosexual or heterosexual. Preferably homosexual, because emotionally this is where I feel myself. But either would do if it was only definite, sure, secure. Where I am is like walking in quicksand. Sinking, all the time. This summer past I dropped out of a woman's group which meant more to me than anything had meant since I was 20 years old, because I discovered myself falling helplessly, and hopelessly, in love with a young woman half my age, knowing that she at least partially reciprocated my feelings, and knowing that she was a committed lesbian, a separa-

tist, to whom my honorable commitment meant nothing because the vulnerable human beings to whom I had

made that commitment, my husband and two of my three children, were after all only males and not worthy of honor and commitment. I am not blaming this girl. I honor her integrity, and I dare to hope that she honors mine. But I would not, and I cannot, wipe out and invalidate the truth of what I have known with men, to say that my husband has exploited me when he has not, to say that what I knew with Walter was not real just because the winds have changed. I have paid the price for this decision, and I don't want to talk about that, just to say that every decision brings more of good and bad than anyone can know when they make it.



The easy way would have been to "follow my heart". Or, all along, the easiest way of all would have been to pretend to be The Compleat Heterosexual, married and with children, and protect myself against any accusations. But, like Popeye, I Yarn What I Yarn. And, as I had Regis say in Heritage, the theme of which was honor and self-acceptance, "I cannot lie about it. If you cannot accept it you need not even call me friend, but I will not deny my own truth."

I am certainly not clinging to my marriage out of a need for security; it was I who financially supported it for years. I am not clinging to it out of need for sexual satisfaction; there has been none in it for seven years or more. Why am I remaining in it? Because, despite my commitments to women, I have a commitment to Walter as a human being, and I will not trash him because in this lifetime (I happen to believe in reincarnation) he happens to be wearing the "wrong" set of sex organs. I could renounce marriage, but I will not renounce caring and concern for my brothers, my grown son, my adolescent son who still needs a mother in his life—just because my deepest concern is for my mother, my sisters, my daughter, and the women who have become mothers and sisters and daughters to me.

Doesn't anyone ever stop thinking in terms of politics and think in human terms? I spent a year writing one of those "honest, uncompromising" feminist novels. Judy Lynn delRey, at Ballantine, turned it down with a letter which nearly destroyed me as a writer and as a human being; I am only now beginning to rebuild some kind of self-esteem and sense of worth, and, God help me, it doesn't help to be condemned because I will not sell out to the feminist movement in return for their support, either. God knows it would be easy; I want to run to my sisters and bury myself in them and console myself. I have the talent and ability that I could write fantasy-dreams for all you women and, even if they didn't sell, I could circulate them or publish them myself (as Dorothy Bryant did with The Comforter) and yell about how I couldn't get a fair hearing from those horrible, horrible people in the commercial press. And we could all sit around and comfort one another



and tell each other how unfair the Media are to us and how we never had a chance, and make excuses for one another that way....

No thanks. I am out here on the firing lines, fighting with all the truth I can, making compromises with such grace as I must, telling the truth—to quote Emerson—"in hard words as I see it, and tomorrow telling tomorrow's truth in hard words without worrying too much about consistency."

If I can open little cracks here and there in the hard shell of the world men have made, fine. If I can't, I'll die trying.

If anyone is interested, there is a book called *A View from Another Closet*, by Janet Bode and Barbara Zaun. It's subtitled *Exploring Bisexuality in Women*. I suggest you read it; you all seem to need your consciousness raised on that subject. For what it's worth, I was interviewed for that book and am often quoted in it under the name of "Helen"....

...This letter is written still in the white heat of—not anger, but defensiveness, dismay. Maybe when I calm down I will be a little less vehement. But I value you all enough to give you my first reaction. I am not ashamed of *Shattered Chain*; it may have been a disappointment to women on the cutting edge of the front line of feminism, who wanted their ultimate wishes fulfilled in fiction. But from the reactions I have received, it reached the audience I wanted: women still weighted with their "invisible chains" who, maybe, have begun to realize that maybe they are not as free as they thought they were, and may start wondering, thinking, maybe doing something, however small. I am not an innovator. I realized that long ago. I take radical ideas and make them popular, I sneak them in under the defenses of conservatives....

...But give me the same credit you would want for yourselves, for honesty and integrity. Knifing people in the back is an old ploy of male-oriented science-fiction fandom. Ever since the women's movement started, I have said that the worst tendency in it is to try and imitate men's worst faults. The name of the game should not be to develop more aggressiveness and competition among women, but to encourage men to rely less upon it. I don't need admiration—I get enough of that, from the uncritical fans who sometimes act as if I could do no wrong. I welcome discriminating criticism. But I want to be given credit for following my own principles, and resisting the temptation to do things the easy way.

## WALTER BREEN

The problem with a phrase like "or, failing that, invent!" is that it becomes too easy to substitute fantasy for reality, wishful thinking for effort. At the risk of offending too many of your readers, may I suggest that one of the good reasons for fantasy is to explore issues harmlessly that might be too costly to set up in hardware? With a sufficient range of fantasy-explorations (something like Einstein's "thought-experiments", which showed how relativity works before people could build cyclotrons or spaceships), we have ample choice of what fantasies are worth translating into social change or technological development. But we have to keep that purpose in mind in making fantasy, or in reading it.

Which brings me right away to something said about *Darkover* and MZB's motives in that kaffeeklatsch you printed. I claim a certain amount of involvement here if only because I was present during gestation

and birth of several *Darkover* novels, besides having to live with them day and night while compiling the *Darkover Concordance*. I do not think that Suzy, Amanda, Janice, and Jeanne have been reading the same novels MZB wrote. I think that (like most of us) they have projected their own wish-fulfillment fantasies onto the earlier novels, only to be disappointed when *Darkover Landfall* or *Shattered Chain* failed to turn out as they wished.

But *Darkover* is not a utopia; and MZB's novels are not of the "If only..." type but of the "What if...?" type. Though I have enjoyed reading about *Darkover*, I would be as out of place there as in the Marine Corps, and would probably end up as a sandal-wearer or a Nevarsin monk. I find the weather intolerable; the mountain and Dry Towns forms of machismo repellent, the Comyn politics no great improvement on Terran; and in *Gemini Problem* I spelled out what would be the disadvantages—as well as the advantages—of living with Iaran. But *Darkover* is understandable in terms of its givens, and MZB's artistic integrity here is unimpugnable: she did what any writer worth her carbon paper would do—she began with a group of environmental givens and honestly extrapolated what kind of society would develop from them, without dragging in a lot of ad hoc as-



sumptions for wish-fulfillment purposes. Visualizing characters clearly and placing them into this environment at this or that time allows them to generate their own plots—the polar extreme from making them one's mouthpiece or moving them around like marionettes. Somewhere, possibly in a letter, MZB said that the most honest SF story she ever read was Tom Godwin's "The Cold Equations". Her own stories have attempted to approximate that; but it means that artistic integrity precludes wish-fulfillment fantasy ("If only...") on *Darkover*. So that if she ever does write an "If only..." it will be laid on another planet with different givens.

In *Shattered Chain* she began with a bunch of questions people wrote or asked: "What is a Free Amazon really like?" "How does one join them?" "Why would any Free Amazon go through neutering?" "Why is Kyla so different from Menella and Darilyn?" And so several months of that same kind of how-did-it-get-that-way speculation preceded *Shattered Chain*. Unfortunately, unlike Ursula LeGuin, MZB has no independent wealth; she normally has to sell her books on chapters and outline, which often proves a constraint in later sections, and drastically limits time for repolishing.

She could see Kindra and Rohana from inside far more clearly than Jaelle; and she had a deadline. And so Shattered Chain left the way open for a sequel answering questions like "What happens when the chemistry wears off and Jaelle sees Peter Haldane for the blinkers-wearing Terranan that he is?" and "What happens to Magda while she spends her half-year in Thendara Guild House learning to think and feel (not merely act) like a Free Amazon?" That is obviously another story; it could not have been tacked onto the end of Shattered Chain. Not if she expected Wollheim to take it; her contracts spell out length, too.

Something else you people possibly don't realize. The general public in West Windwhistle, Arizona, Jackrabbit Crossing, Texas, and Tobacco Chaw, South Carolina, are having their consciousness raised by these books; one notch at a time, to be sure, but still raised. And it works. Lots of them have written her saying so. Let them read adventures about people they can identify with, and find in the process that they are having to think in different categories, and they learn. Fling *The Female Man* at them and they put it down unread (or, charitably, half read), or they blast it as feminist propaganda, refusing to identify even a moment with any of the protagonists. But let them read *Shattered Chain* and they think they have read a major science-fiction novel (which they have)—enough, at least, to know what is being talked about when something a leetle bit more radical comes their way, as sooner or later it will. I don't think I'm exaggerating in guessing that this step-by-step CR is in its own way likely to have more effect on more people on more benighted areas of Middle America than the uncompromising (and often wish-fulfilling) radicalism of the kind of fantasy novels Amanda and Suzy and their compatriots would rather write and rather read. (I am not attacking these: dammit, I'd be about the last person in the world to defend masculism. I am simply pointing out the pragmatic side, the matter of what gets published, what is carried on paperback bookshelves in Middle America's groceries and liquor stores and bus stations.)

So it hardly behooves Amanda (of all people!) to attack MZB's artistic integrity by blaming her for not writing wish-fulfillment books.

And anyone who can say of MZB that "she is protected by having a husband" is merely showing ignorance! I have seen her miserable at being attacked by lesbian separatists even as by traditional sexists. Bisexuals get it from both sides. Bigotry has become entrenched in the feminist and gay worlds, where it belongs as little as it does among blacks, and I am ashamed to see it there. I am ashamed to belong to any fraction of the human race that is still capable of it. I am ashamed of fandom for countenancing that kind of thing. I am ashamed of Janus for printing it!

But back to wish-fulfillment fantasy. I have read enough separatist literature to realize that much of it is fantasy dishonestly or ignorantly (take your pick) masquerading as scientific evaluation of relationships in and between the genders. I am alluding, in particular, to its common notions (1) that the Y chromosome is merely a defective X, (2) that to be male is by definition to be exploitive (as though every male automatically imitates John Wayne, Mike Hammer, or James Bond, according to level of sophistication, and subscribes to the gospel according to Gilder), and (3) that parthenogenesis à la The Haploids (and/or cloning) is the desirable and feasible goal towards which every female scientist must work. The trouble is that these cannot be givens; at best they are propositions whose truth (if any) remains to be proved. As a student of biology and sociology I have not seen compelling evidence for any of them, and I have seen plenty of evidence that all are wish-

fulfilling fantasies adopted for political purposes (solidarity in revolutionary activity). Quite apart from my own biases (which are not the traditional ones), I am convinced that sexual dimorphism did not begin with man, but with the earliest chordates; I am convinced that human males, not being locked into hormonal stereotypy, can have their consciousness raised above bigotry and exploitiveness; I am convinced that good and evil are as independent of gender as of color; I am convinced that a cloned haploid race would be biologically handicapped for genetic recombination, for safety factors of variability as possible adaptation to new bacterial or viral invaders; I am convinced that what is basically bugging many feminists is less the fact of two genders than how males have been programmed to react to females. A little knowledge of cross-cultural anthropology and history would convince even a Darkovan that gender roles do not divide themselves the same way in every country, and need not continue to divide themselves the same way even over here.

And so when separatists attack MZB for not writing to their own wish-fulfillment expectations, they demand that she abandon artistic integrity. Do they seriously want her to write only vanity-press effusions for a few thousand True Believers rather than to go on raising consciousness in Middle America? Do they seriously advocate abandoning DAW Books to John Norman?

Which puts a different face on Suzy's "People act rationally...even crazy people." If they did, they would not take wish-fulfillment fantasy as a rational basis for political action or for judging integrity. But, then, this notion has wrecked almost as many lives as bigotry. What Aristotle actually said was, "Human beings are capable of reason." He would surely have denied Suzy's version! He said it because in his day some little boys actually managed to solve arithmetic problems using those absurdly complicated Greek numerals, which didn't include a zero. But Suzy's version reflects the kind of thinking that gave us Ayn Rand and which earlier made the findings of depth psychology from Freud to Maslow so hard to take. People's consciousness has had to be raised on that issue, too; if only to enable them to try to learn to recognize, at least part of the time, when we are acting rationally and when we are not, and to some extent maybe even why. And I submit that MZB's process in working out her novels is largely rational—proceeding from the givens to the plots—even though some of the issues she deals with aren't, because people aren't. But the criticism your quartet has made is not rational and should not pretend to be. Rational criticism would address itself to quite other matters and in other manners.

Feel free to print any part of this; but if you don't print it, at least let your kaffeeklatsch people see it. After all, they started it. ☘

## JOANNA RUSS

Janus got lost, someone has my copy of *The Shattered Chain*, and I'm sitting amidst piles of ungraded papers. My clearest impulse at the moment is simply to yell: "Will everybody please shut up!"

It's very tempting to snipe at other feminists. The sexist establishment (men) is far too monolithic and scary, so instead of kicking Daddy we kick Mommy and Sis. It's self-defeating, though. I think Suzy was very intemperate and Amanda thoughtless, but I don't think what either of them said merited being called "talked about behind her back", since it obviously wasn't behind anybody's back. Would that it had been. Then I wouldn't have to write about it.

First off, contests about who is more oppressed are self-destructive, fruitless, and silly. Period. Make common cause with your allies, and if you must complain that nobody knows the trouble you've seen, do it in private. Or do it to Henry Kissinger, which is better. If women weren't oppressed, there wouldn't be a women's movement. I think we can all assume that we are all oppressed and turn down any opportunities for the Suffering Sweepstakes. Yes, I know, I've done it too, but for goodness' sakes don't print it!

That, as Tom Lehrer would say, is a sobering thought.



I could not figure out, from either Janus or MZB's letter (which arrived the same day) what sort of copping out Suzy and Amanda were talking about. It never occurred to me that Jaelle would turn out to be a lesbian. My memory of the book is a little dim, which everyone should take into account, by the way. I do think that books have to be dramatically logical and coherent and that any fudging with the vision behind the book will show in confusion or feebleness in the book, but I don't see that such vision has to follow any party line whatsoever, or that an artist is obliged to construct all-female utopias unless that's what she wants to do.

By the way, I emphatically disagree with Marion that all-female utopias are equivalent to "wet dreams" of dominating women had by perpetual adolescents (male). They are both wishful thinking, but wishful thinking shows up in all fantasy and all art. As far as anyone can tell from male-oriented SF, men do not daydream about worlds in which women do not exist. Male daydreams (of the kind MZB is talking about) are dreams of dominance. The equivalent of masculine dreams of power, violence, and pliable women ought to be dreams of power, violence, and pliable men—and these daydreams do get into quite a few novels. But they are novels all written by men. (I have an article on 10 of these role-reversal stories coming out in a women's-studies journal called Signs.) Women who write about a world in which men have disappeared are not writing about imperialist domination; they are writing about a world in which women can be free. And for the moment they can't imagine that such a world can exist unless you make the men vanish. Daydreams of domination and daydreams of freedom are very different, and I don't think that both are equally immoral or unethical. I resent hearing dreams of freedom called anybody's "wet dreams" (and I also dislike sex being used as an automatic put-down of anything).

I don't know how Suzy meant that the book "copped out"—except that it didn't pick up the material she herself is using for Motherlines—and apparently

Suzy's "copping out" means one thing and MZB's "copping out" another. I'll add mine just for the hell of it. Yes, I do think something happened to the book about 2/3 of the way through. I'm not sure what happened (and, as I said, I don't have the novel in front of me). I suspect that it's easy for any novelist to show us that the Dry Towns are bad—they're not just sexist, they're gynocidal and murderously misogynist—but when we move back into a society more like our own, in which things aren't so clear, then the problems begin. Suzette Elgin's *At the Seventh Level* tries to show a society that isn't grossly sexist, but I think it fails. I've tried to do the same thing in a novel I just finished and I think I fail, too. What happened in *Chain* was that somewhere about 2/3 of the way through everybody reappeared with different personalities and the plot went wobbly. Jaelle became unreal and Rohana (who had been an interesting conservative) turned smug and then we had a love affair which mostly wasn't described, so it was unreal, and so on. I don't think any of this has anything to do with Bradley's censoring homosexuality out of the book. I think what happened dramatically was that once we moved from the open male/female enmity of the Dry Towns (which can be imaged almost as one nation against another, or as chattel slavery) we move into complex personal relations for which *Chain* has no room.

A woman whose sexuality (according to the model of imprinting talked about in the book) was formed in the Dry Towns but who grew up as a Free Amazon is going to be a woman with one hell of a lot of conflicts, to put it mildly. We have one incident—the business with the ribbon—which shows this, but then we have that love affair, about which we have no information except the most conventional stereotype. Jaelle says she will be independent in public and "feminine" in private, a schizoid solution which everybody tried in the 1950s and which obviously can't work; you can't have one personality at work and another one in bed without going more or less bonkers. There are all sorts of solutions (all of which are impossible to one degree or another) apart from an ultimatum to the lover to either accept her as she is or get out (which will work, i.e., he'll either do it or get out, sooner or later). And of course you can't Scotch-tape Miss America to Ti-Grace Atkinson and have a plausible character—which is what happens to Jaelle.

I think that author has backed into the very sexism the first 2/3 of the book tries to smash. She seems obliged to take back a good deal she's said and now argue that Lady Rohana's kind of life is OK and that Jaelle is really a "nice normal" girl. It would be easy to prove that Rohana's husband is not a beast (he need not be as unpleasant as Bradley makes him, either) and that Darkover is not sexist in the gross way of the Dry Towns. It would be easy to show that Jaelle is not a stereotype of a "women's libber". But you cannot simply take back everything you said; it doesn't work. Rohana's arguments turn into the Grande Inquisitor's (people can't use freedom and oughtn't to have it) and Jaelle becomes unbelievable. Proving that patriarchal marriage is right is proving that Jaelle is wrong. Giving Jaelle the license to be a Free Amazon because she also sews and flirts and wears nice clothes is obviously silly. It's like that ritual feminists used to go through way back in 1967; first you tell everybody that you're married and love your husband and kids and then you argue that women ought to be free not to be married and not to love their husband and kids. Which you are allowed to say because you are married and do love your husband and kids, etc. It's idiotic, and self-defeating.

If Bradley was intentionally enfeebling the end so that readers would be moved to conclude that Rohana's arguments are no good and Jaelle can't really be a Sweet Young Thing, I think she's doing something so technically difficult that it simply can't be done. She's invalidating the narrative point of view itself.

What bothers me about the ending (which I simply ignored) is that I don't think it's possible to "sneak" Radical Feminism into an otherwise harmless book. For one thing, I suspect most readers who accept the first 2/3 will either be angry at the final 1/3 or discount it. But those who want the conventional ending will not like the first 2/3 and will not accept them (and so will probably never get to the ending). People are not that dumb.

Also, once you become a feminist you are a radical, and of course the book is radical and feminist and polemical. Almost all feminists, after an initial period of discovery, move leftwards with the speed of light. I don't mean socialist necessarily, but radicalism of some sort. I'm not surprised that Bradley's being criticized for radical polemics; Chain is radical polemics, with a loud scramble to take it all back at the end (and this has nothing to do with lesbianism).

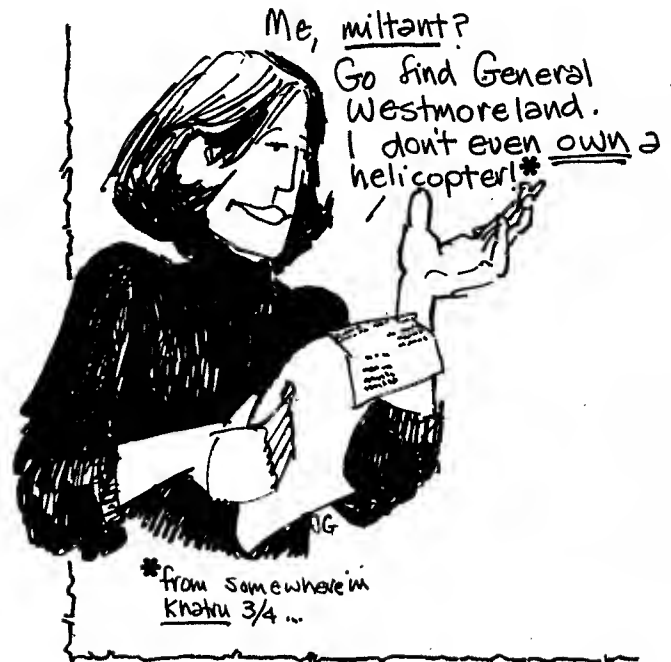
When I say "take it all back" I don't mean that Jaelle should murder her uncle and set fire to the castle. I mean that the book ought to show the personal cost of growing up in a sexist world, and the complexities of relations with one's relatives and one's lover. Part of this is the problem of starting the book in the mode of an adventure story (which will not contain the interpersonal analysis of society that any exploration of sexism needs) and suddenly having to switch about 2/3 of the way down. Part of it, apparently, is simple commercial censorship. Bradley may be right in believing that if the book can get past the publisher it will then reach women who need that first 2/3. (I don't think their ideas will be changed unless they are ready for change, i.e., the ideal reader for the book is someone who knows little about feminism but is emotionally a feminist already.) I can believe that doing work like this is a balancing act. I wonder, however, just how necessary it is and what effects it has....



...One thing I'd like to pass on was said by a woman here (with children and married) who was talking to young mothers' groups about motherhood last year. She said she tried to soft-pedal her pitch in order not to turn them off, but found that once you gave in on any point or in any way ameliorated the truth, everything went into a muddle. She said that in order to help them she found that she had to be as radical as she knew how to be, i.e., as truthful, as going-to-the-root. And Chip Delany has said that once you let the stereotypes into your work, they

will take over completely. If you moderate the message in order to reach more people, it doesn't (I suspect) work; for one thing, those who see the message would see it in stronger form too, and those who don't want to see it simply miss it anyway. And, at best, what you then communicate is in itself qualified and partially crippled. I suspect I agree.

If we're going to talk about these issues, let's talk about the issues, hey? 🍌



## AMANDA BANKIER

...I admire most of Marion Bradley's science fiction, particularly her more recent novels. The Shattered Chain is a good novel, but the ending is weak compared to the beginning, in ways that Joanna Russ points out with greater skill than I could manage. This can be disappointing. The particular disappointment discussed was the fact that we see relatively little of how the Free Amazons operate internally (at Guildhouses, and so on). The possibility of a relationship between Jaelle and Magda was raised only because Bradley had mentioned it in The Witch and the Chameleon, but it is inessential as a part of seeing any more, and one could certainly talk more about the Free Amazons without anyone's relationships, hypothetical or otherwise, coming into it. Russ has also expressed as well as I could the reasons why many women value descriptions of all-female societies or groups within a society.

I apologize for quoting what I took to be public material and for not making clear that my agreement about possible advantages of being (or having been) married to women holding radical views applied only to the pressures of broad public opinion and not to anyone's personal life. Although I may be wrong even about that, I have seen evidence for it in other circumstances. 🍌



James Tiptree, Jr.:

NOW WHAT I HAVE SAID HERE  
IMPLIES THAT INDIVIDUAL  
WOMEN CAN QUITE EASILY BE,  
IN EFFECT, MALES.

a quote, quite out of  
context, from KHATRU  
3/4, 1975, p 21.



## SUZY MCKEE CHARNAS

...I've had my say about Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Shattered Chain*, and suggest that interested readers read the book and make up their own minds about it. ■

## JESSICA A. SALMONSON

...The high point for me was the transcript of the luncheon conversation. So many subjects were touched on, it really jerked me back and forth in a whirlwind of thoughts and ideas and observations.

To Amanda: I don't think it is necessarily odd that the characters in *Eld* (or in Leiber's or Vance's fantasies) speak colloquial American. All people speak colloquially in their own time reference, and it is valid to preserve the colloquialism when "translating" into a modern language.

To Suzy: Judy Lynn has also rejected a novel by MZB which extrapolated theories set forth by Elizabeth Gould Davis and others. The subject is ideal to SF, but unpopular with publishers and editors with male values. If we are to develop our own ideas in SF, we will have to provide our own editorial and publishing expertise. I would like to see a feminist SF publishing house. A company no larger than Daughters, Inc., is paying its writers royalties that compare favorably with big companies (which sell a cheaper product, then let it go out of print). The many small feminist presses are liable to prove more viable for women than all the big SF publishers and editors combined; the latter have their roots in a miniature 50-year-old patriarchal "culture" called science fiction. Women's SF will have to evolve from women's culture. The question should not be "What if SF authors dealt with women's issues?" but "What if women who know more about Susan B. than Hugo G. wrote science fiction?" We have our own heritage to explore! ... ■

## GEORGE FERGUS

In a discussion printed in the December issue of *Janus*, Suzy McKee Charnas suggested that not too far in the future a pill will become available that allows couples to select the sex of their children. And since nearly everyone will want to produce boys rather than girls, this will kill our progress toward sexual equality. I'm not quite as worried as Suzy is, and I'd like to give you a few of my reasons.

Firstly, I don't think Suzy should attach so much importance to the fact that "they" are calling it "the manchild pill", since this term has been used only once, in an addle-headed article on how one might get all those "ignorant and short-sighted" people in the developing countries to practice at least some form of birth control. The phrase was dragged out of obscurity recently by an associate editor of *Psychology Today* solely for the purpose of a sensationalistic article on the possible dangers of such a technology. Previously, investigators have always called it either "sex preselection" or "sex control".

I might note that, historically, sex control has always been available, in the form of female infanticide. However, even in those societies with minimal scruples about this practice, no great overwhelming abundance of males has developed. What would be the purpose of producing excess men who won't be able to find wives?

Turning to the modern US, the best available data (1970 national fertility study) indicate that, although 63% of married women want their first child to be a boy, 79% of those whose first child is male want their second to be a girl. And for those who want more than two children, there is little preference for specific sex. The overall preference of these women was not found to differ significantly from the proportion of males to females that would occur naturally. The influence of the father might further increase the desire for a first-born male, but is not likely to reduce the mother's desire for a girl as second child. Thus, the sex ratio will probably not change significantly, even if all parents deliberately selected the sex of every child.

But sex control is hardly likely to become a universal practice. In particular, those less-educated parents who are most likely to take the traditional view of boys as more desirable are those least likely to engage in any significant family planning. And in order to take advantage of a sex-control pill, pregnancies have to be planned. In addition, several of the prognosticators forget that there is a difference between expressing a preference and actually doing something about it, particularly when one would be interfering with "nature". When asked if they would actually take advantage of sex control in the form of a simple prescription pill, fully 65% of a typical US college sample said "no."

A similar factor is operating to reduce the likelihood that there will be a great excess of males among firstborns. The lack of family planning by the poorly educated is even greater with respect to the first child. From past requests to doctors, sex control seems to be strongly desired not so much for the first child as to insure that the second child is of the opposite sex.

In any case, I can't agree that lowering the number of girls among firstborns would necessarily make women any more of a "second sex" than they are now. Firstborns, in fact, are more likely to be imbued by their parents with traditional values, including female subservience. As a result, they

have more conservative beliefs than laterborns about the personalities and abilities of men and women in general. Although they are more likely to have the opportunity to attend college, they are also more likely to want to drop out before graduation to get married.

It appears to be the girls with older brothers (rather than younger brothers) who are actually more likely to develop some traditionally masculine traits, to rebel against established sex roles, and to reject contentions of male superiority. Lucille Forer, in *The Birth Order Factor* (1976), explicitly describes the girl with an older brother as "the most likely candidate for the feminist movement".

Nor should Suzy downgrade the movement's recent advances. Sociologist Amitai Etzioni, author of the most well known and comprehensive treatise on the probable dangers of sex control, formerly advocated a ban on further research in this area. But he now feels that the newly raised consciousness of women has reduced the danger to the point where our present society "is not likely to be seriously undermined". (I have been unable so far to find any study of sex preferences that is recent enough to firmly document any such shift in attitudes, but I am still looking.)

Another point is that the media seem more and more easily triggered to call attention to such problems. The moment a significant excess of male births occurred, there would probably be a great hue and cry about there not being enough girls produced for these boys to marry when they grow up. If parents continue to have a strong desire for their children to marry, many of them would presumably start to think twice about producing more boys.

In fact, the hue and cry will probably arise long before sex control technology could progress to the point of becoming cheap and widespread. There is at present no such thing as a "manchild pill", not even in an experimental state. The only reliable sex-control methods that can be expected to become available in the near future are (1) selective abortion after the sex of the fetus is determined, which will probably become possible before the end of the first trimester of pregnancy, when abortion is least dangerous, and (2) separation of the father's X- and Y-

bearing sperm in the laboratory, followed by artificial insemination. Both techniques are sufficiently costly, bothersome, or morally objectionable that their use is not liable to become particularly widespread, but they are already causing an increase in attention to sex control as a possible social problem.

The prediction of an actual sex-control "pill" may be as premature as all those other futuristic predictions we heard a few years back, like weather modification. During the last couple of decades, much more research effort has gone into the development of contraceptive pills than will probably ever go toward a sex-control pill, but we still have only one type of birth-control pill, which does nothing but simulate the natural contraceptive effect of pregnancy. (Though, to be fair, the male version of the pill finally seems to be coming along. It is now undergoing clinical trials.)

We are still trying to perfect sex-control methods (such as separating the two types of sperm on the basis of the 2 or 3% average difference in weight, or their supposedly different sensitivity to environmental acidity) that were giving "very promising" results more than 40 years ago! Indeed, Dr. Landrum Shettles was so convinced he had solved the problem that in 1969 he wrote a book (*Your Baby's Sex: Now You Can Choose*), which can still be found on sale at your local bookstore even though several other investigators have shown that its basic premise is untrue. (By the way, Dr. Shettles reported that the hundreds of letters of inquiry he received expressed approximately equal desires for girls or boys.)

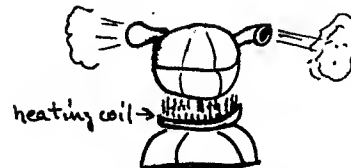
Even if a more easily implemented chemical technique, such as a selective spermicide, were ever perfected, it is also unlikely that it would be approved for use in human beings. Such agents merely attack one type of sperm more than the other, creating a small likelihood of genetic damage in those sperm that survive. The fear of birth defects is generally greater than the desire to have children of specific sex.

It is now 9 years since Etzioni predicted that we would have sex predetermination within 5...and except for the rather undesirable techniques I mentioned above, we are no closer than we were then. ●

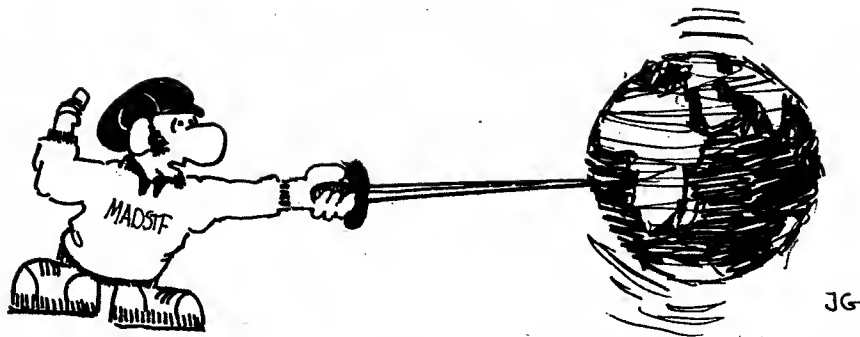


#### THE AGE OF STEAM—THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART 4

Robert Fulton's steam beanie, based on Hero's engine, would not prove practical until the development of fuels less cumbersome than coal.



GR



# J. B. vs THE WORLD

MUMBLES FROM THE TIME CLOSET  
BY JOHN BARTOLT

Beginning with this issue, I'll be doing the column by myself, under this new title (with apologies to Gene Wolfe). Let us know what you think.

There are two new truly professional science fiction magazines out. I'll take the second first: *Cosmos Science Fiction and Fantasy*. It's a large format (8" x 11", or 21 x 28 cm) and 72 pages, reminiscent of Roger Elwood's ill-fated (and poorly distributed) *Odyssey* (see JB vs JB, *Janus*, Vol. 2, No. 3). *Cosmos* isn't in any of the local bookstores, with the exception of the Madison Book Co-op (which it has through the efforts of Karen Axness), so I suspect it may have some distribution problems, too. It's edited by David Hartwell and published by Baronet Publishing. The prevalent theory is that Baronet is a skin-magazine publisher branching out (the inside back cover of *Cosmos* is an ad for a new movie magazine).

Anyway, back to *Cosmos*. It's scheduled to be bimonthly; it costs \$1, or \$5 for a year's subscription. They seem pretty sure they're going to have a second issue: they've got the first part of a serial in this one. It's got a nice cover by George Schelling, and, besides the usual black and white drawings, it's got some color interiors, including a two-page centerfold. My estimates indicate it has about the same word count as a recent issue of *Analogue* (which is, of course, \$1.25 now).

*Cosmos* has a book review column by Robert Silverberg (just like *Odyssey*); in *Odyssey*, Charles N. Brown had a fan column; in *Cosmos* he has a media column (with nothing very new in it). The fan column was done by Ginjer Buchanan (in which she kept referring to MiniCon as "Minncon"). The science editor is Janet R. Williams, and, unlike many of the science editors of SF magazines, she is editing the science feature, not writing it (and speaking of unusual [it took me a while to notice] a woman science editor? That's a first as far as I know). This issue's article, a very interesting piece by Lynn Margulis (who, the biographical intro informs me, got a master's degree in zoology and genetics here at the University of Wisconsin [and whose first husband, Lesleigh Luttrell informs me, was Carl Sagan, the astronomer]), is about symbiosis. Too bad they couldn't get better illos. I think symbiosis ("an interdependent, mutually beneficial, permanent associ-

ation between members of different species") could be used to invent really interesting (and peculiar) aliens (the aliens in Poul Anderson's *Fire Time* were symbiotic, though, as I recall, not to any great extent; he didn't really explore the possibilities). All these features are grouped into the "Center Section", along with messages from the editor and publisher, and some fan art.

I found the fiction for the most part adequate, but not outstanding. There's a novella by Michael Bishop, and the first half of a "Fahrd and the Grey Mouser" novel. I've never read any of the other F&GM stories, so I can't compare it. Adventure fantasy, or sword and sorcery, or whatever you call it, isn't my cup of blood; but I guess I'd like to find out how the story ends.

There are five short stories: Larry Niven's was ... ummm...mildly amusing; two robot stories, of sorts, by Greg Benford and RayLyn Moore (the former being the better; in fact, I guess I liked Benford's the best of any of the short stories); an unremarkable story by Cherry Wilder; and finally, a weak story by Frederick Pohl. Pohl's story was almost pure "message" (or sermon), without much plot. Thematically, it reminded me of my story "Sisters" (*Janus*, Vol. 1, No. 1). Perhaps the strangest thing is that it contains two conflicting statements. Near the beginning, it reads, "Burt was something like a public accountant, in charge of Southern New York Regional energy budgets." Toward the end it says, "Burt was a tax accountant for the New York State government." Similar, but not matching, as Hugh Downs used to say. How did this get past Pohl and the editors? Nothing happened in between those statements, either.

Lest I sound too critical of *Cosmos*, let me say that overall, the fiction was of average quality: not unlike what you might find in any issue of *Galaxy*.

The other new magazine is *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* (IASFM; Lester Del Rey, in his review of the first issue [*Analogue*, April 1977], complains that that's unpronounceable; so why don't we just get friendly and call it "Ike's SF"?). It's from Davis publishing (*Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* [EQMM], *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine* [AHMM]) and is the regular digest size, and a little bit fatter than most SF magazines (is that a reflec-

tion on it's namesake?). George Scithers is doing the real editing, with Gardner Dozois as associate editor.

The first issue has a lot of big names; the obligatory Charlie Brown column is about books, and Martin Gardner has a regular feature, which poses some sort of puzzle. I haven't read much of the first issue yet (and it's been reviewed in *Analog*), so let me go on to the second issue, just out. (It's a quarterly; \$1 per issue, but \$5.40 for a four issue subscription; they haven't gotten their second class mailing permit yet, and when they do, the rate will go down. Since Davis already has established pulp magazines, they don't seem to be having the distribution problems like other new magazines.) As I was saying, the lead story in the second issue, by Kevin O'Donnell, Jr., is very good—one of the best I've read in the magazines in some time; maybe the opening could have been improved, but it's adequate. The next one, by J. P. Boyd, is somewhat weak, and confused me temporarily twice (probably once my fault and once the story's). John Shirley's story was rather trite. And there's a rather strange one by Jack C. Haldeman II, which was enjoyable (is he related to Joe? There was an offhand reference to "old Mandella", which immediately recalled to me the protagonist of *Forever War*). Asimov has two short-stories, which are just puns.

My biggest complaint is the artwork, or lack thereof. Starting with the cover: OK, I guess you can get away with plastering Ike's face on the cover of the first issue, but on the second, we get his profile. Great—a pair of mugshots. I guess it's

modeled on *AHMM* instead of the SF pulps. It could use more interior art, too.

There are a couple of other new magazines, too. There's *Galileo*; I got the first issue at the World-Con; I guess there's a second issue out, or will be soon. From my cursory inspection, they might not get much farther. Oh, it's not bad, really, but they're not even trying to distribute it, except by subscription, and at a very few "selected" book stores (of which the Madison Book Co-op may be one); I don't think it's going to go: not many people will subscribe to a magazine sight unseen. The other magazine that I know about is *Unearth*; from what I hear (I haven't seen it), it will be reburied shortly. Since it features stories by previously unpublished authors, and is paying bottom-of-the-barrel rates (\$20 per story), I can't believe it will get much of a readership (Ike's SF, and I think *Cosmos*, are paying top rates—up to 5¢ a word).

To anybody who made a close reading of my story in the last issue "Timewaves", and discovered an error in logic in it, I found it too, and am now working on a revision.

Finally, a quotation from the March 1977 issue of *Galaxy* (which seems to have trouble just getting published). This is from Jerry Pournelle's article: "...mankind [sic] may well remember the significance of July 20 a long time after most people have forgotten why July 4 is important." If that sounds familiar, go back and read the end of JB vs. JB in *Janus*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (September 1976). Well, he claims the article was written before MidAmeriCon.





[One confident afternoon many months ago, I wrote Suzy McKee Charnas a letter telling her how impressed I was with her novel, *Walk to the End of the World*, and also making a suggestion about the publication of her finished, but not yet published, *Motherlines*. I seriously suggested what Jan and I had merely joked about in the course of our luncheon-conversation last September at MAC with Suzy and Amanda Bankier, i.e. that she let us publish part of her new novel in *Janus*, or, alternatively, that she let me read it and do a pre-publication review of it. What could I lose?, I said to myself, signing the letter with a flourish... Incredibly, I received the whole manuscript by return mail, with a letter agreeing to let me do a pre-publication review. Following some exuberant celebration, an immediate reading of the MS, and some less fun procrastination (see the review of that in "News Nurd"), here for your voyeuristic sneak-preview enjoyment is my review. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

[It isn't likely that *Walk*, *Motherlines*, and *Holdfast Harrowing* (I think) will be published together as a trilogy for some time, though a trilogy is of course what they are (or will be, when HH is written). Since Ballantine has *Walk* and won't take *Motherlines*, at least these two volumes will belong to different publishers. A pity, but there it is, and unless Ballantine lets *Walk* go out of print and stay there for a sufficient time to terminate their rights to it, there it will remain. I will have to rely on readers hunting up the related books, and so it will always be a good thing for someone reviewing one to dwell a bit on the other(s) so that those readers will know what to look for. Incidentally, *Walk* is to be reissued in May 1977 for those who missed it the first time around. —SUZY MCKEE CHARNAS]

One of the reasons Charnas feels that *Motherlines* is being rejected by publishers so far, is that the material is too radical for most houses. In a letter to *Janus*, she described one woman editor's reaction to it:

"You know, if this story were all about men it would be a terrific story. I'm worried about my market [SF readers, notoriously and



probably still correctly mostly male]. *The Female Man* had male characters in it, so men would pick it up and at least open it. But men get very angry..." You finish it, it's not hard: "to be left out."

In the transcript of the conversation at MAC, (*Janus*, Vol. 2, No. 4), she mentioned that probably the women's "technical and ceremonial attachment to horses" portrayed in the novel has had something to do with its rejection. I believe that the real reason probably goes far deeper than this image, although I do agree that *Motherlines* is a very radical book indeed. I think also that for the same reasons *Motherlines* is being rejected, it will, once published, become an important book, melding SF and radical feminist ideas.

Before I talk about the ideas expressed by Charnas in *Motherlines*, here is some brief background: *Motherlines* is a sequel to Suzy McKee Charnas' first novel, *Walk to the end of the World* (Ballantine—1974), and is also, perhaps (and hopefully) the second of a trilogy of novels that chart the stories, the geography and the economy of a section of a post-ecocatastrophe (or post-"Wasting") earth. In *Walk*, human survivors seem to be hopelessly and perilously trapped on a narrow sliver of shore called "Holdfast," subsisting on a decreasing supply of pollution-fed sea kelp. These survivors are descendants of the men who were responsible for the Wasting and the women they took with them into the shelters after the end became unavoidable. During the interim of their retreat, records and memory of actual past events are twisted and upon their emergence, and still at the time *Walk*'s story is set, women are no longer called women, but "fems" and are degraded in every way possible by male masters, who have turned all blame and hatred onto the women. Women are animals in this world where there are no more animals left living. Male society is intensely competitive, based on a societal seniority system. Homosexuality is normal, heterosexuality perverse.

Alldera—a fem slave—is a major character through both *Walk* and *Motherlines*. At *Walk*'s conclusion, she escapes Holdfast to look for the perhaps mythical land of free fems. In *Motherlines*, she finds it, although finding a place in the new world is not nearly as simple a matter as finding the place itself. Alldera's gradual understanding

The slave knows her master through and through; she has to, for her survival and her comfort if her men are in a position to provide any. The master, however, is never forced by the realities of power to so much as notice the slave. What he sees if he does choose to look need never be corrected by reality, since part of the slave's survival technique is to play the roles that the masters have invented for them. The slave who allows jarring notes into her performance risks punishment for challenging the master's prejudices. In any event, most masters have no desire to see beyond the role-playing camouflage. If he perceives his slave as a real person instead of a cartoon-stereotype, his position as master (which depends for its justification on reducing the slave to cartoon proportions) becomes untenable.

Suzy McKee Charnas  
KHATRU 3/4, 1975, pp 13-14.

# About Suzy McKee Charnas': The Motherlines A Critique by Jeanne Gomoll

WITH COMMENTARY BY S. M. CHARNAS

and integration with the Free Fems' and the Riding Fems' societies (two cultures beyond the wasteland that surrounds Holdfast) is the substance of *Motherlines'* story.

The Free Fems are women who have escaped Holdfast and live proudly without men, yet ironically reproduce the repressive hierarchies of male Holdfast society. Theirs is a separatist and—literally as well as culturally—a sterile society. The Free Fems dream of a revenge and rescue mission to Holdfast to free their sisters, a dream that will never occur. Bitterly recalled stories of their past repression, and bold plans for their return to Holdfast are religious-like illusions satisfying their need for purpose.

The Women, the Riding Women, the women of the plains, are not from Holdfast (but rather, descendants of a different group of Wasting survivors, living nomadic, horse-dependant existences). They are contemptuous of the Free Fems for their male hierarchies and their illusions, but most of all for their sterility. For the Riding Women have children. Not wanting to spoil your first reading of this fine novel for you, I won't divulge the history of these women which Alldera discovers during the course of the story. Obviously, however, in this land where no men live, the women have found a way to completely control reproduction. (From this fact comes Charnas' choice of the novel's title.)

In the course of *Walk* and *Motherlines*, it seems to me that Charnas is saying some very important things. In *Walk*, I see an exaggerated, but accurate portrayal of power as-it-exists-now, for most women living in this world. As has always been the case since the ancient goddesses were raped and murdered or married to gods and made subservient to the newer male figures, since the story of Adam and Eve was told, male-oriented cultures have twisted the mythology to claim and hold power in society. The mythology of Holdfast (i.e. that women were responsible for the Wasting—as Pandora/ Eve and all women since are responsible for mortality and all human suffering...) reflects and "justifies" the master-slave relationship of men and women. In the Free Fem society of *Motherlines*, those in power use the myth of the fems' return to Holdfast to control the other women.

*Motherlines* deals with the period of separation that I think Charnas sees as necessary (either indi-

vidually or as a group), something that women must experience before cooperation with men and real change from institutionalized misogyny takes place. This is not a new concept, but one that has been heard often in connection with Black separatism movements, as well as in the psychological theory having to do with the need for individual experience

and self-liking before an individual can become integrated into a larger social group. The American Indian custom of going on a quest for a personal totem appropriately seems to fit in here too. It's my speculation that the third novel of Charnas' projected trilogy will deal with the final step of this process, that is, reintegration of the individual/group into the whole of society. The slave cannot be "made" equal to the master until she has defined herself in freedom first. The Free Fems only duplicate the male hierarchies: although they are physically free, they do not understand freedom because they have not come to terms with the meaning of power.

During the experience of isolation, one learns what one's strengths are, what power one possesses. The recognition of power, from an individual awareness and then among others is a central theme of Charnas' work. To know one's power is to be free: physical conditions are not enough. Implicit in *Walk* and dramatically portrayed in *Motherlines*, is the notion that the basis of all real power is motherhood. In *Walk*, men both abhor and fear women: Women are animals lacking any intelligence, unclean and at fault. Still, at the same time, they are incredibly dangerous, cunning, and needed. Without them, there could be no future generations. The perversion of this irreplaceable power by men through fear and envy has always been a factor in the patriarchy. Midwives have been burned more often than any other type of person as witches for their special knowledge.\* Men do not envy a woman's generative ability: women envy his penis. Right. Earlier, the Greeks wistfully imagined that women were merely containers into which a complete human child was deposited, at conception, by men. Throughout the history of the patriarchy, the female capacity has been perverted by cultural concepts (institutionalized misogyny) from miracle to God's punishment, from glory to horror. An ex-

As practiced today, mothering is a martyrdom for a human being. Crazy.

James Tiptree  
KHATRU 3/4, 1975, p. 20.

cellent treatment of the evolution of the institution of motherhood along these lines can be found in Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born* (Norton, 1976). She comments, for instance, that:

One of the themes of post-Freudian psychology is that man's contributions to culture are his way of compensating for the lack of the one, elemental, creative power of motherhood. Bruno Bettelheim has analysed male initiation rituals as outgrowths of deep male envy of this female power. Horney suggests that, despite male dominance in every other sphere, a residual envy and resentment has remained which has expressed itself in phallogocentric thinking (including such concepts as "penis envy"), in the devaluation (I would call it reduction) of motherhood, and in a generally misogynist civilization. (pp. 113-14)

\*B. Ehrenreich & D. English. *Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers* (Old Westbury, NY, Feminist Press, 1973).

Today, women's capacity to give birth is still twisted into a handicap that is used to explain away and excuse the inequality of opportunity for women. To escape these cultural limitations, many women find that they must create or find new life styles, or that they must refuse to have children altogether.



Alldera is pregnant at the beginning of *Motherlines*, and as the struggle for her between the Riding Women and the Free Fems demonstrates, both groups are aware of the importance of her pregnancy. Still, the two groups hold different beliefs about the way they are to avoid losing their freedom: The Free Fems in separatism, and the Riding Women through the control of an alternative means of reproduction. Both concepts are represented in current radical feminist theory, but both are essentially biological deadends without eventual cooperation with men, which is what Alldera's child seems to represent. Separat-

... instead of having to twist "reality" in order to create "realistic" free female characters in today's unfree society, the SF writer can create the societies that would produce those characters, not as exceptions of limited meaning and impact, but as the healthy, solid norm -- for example, Takver in *THE DISPOSSESSED*. SF lets women write their dreams as well as their nightmares.

Suzy McKee Charnas  
KHATRU 3/4, 1975, p. 9.

tism can only be a temporary solution.

As Alldera travels back and forth between groups, her "family" among the Riding Women, her sisters among the Free Fems and the many beautifully-drawn characters in this novel, she instigates communication between them. The Fems learn different, freer ways of relating to each other within a community, and the Riding Women begin to understand and respect the importance of remembering one's past and dreaming for one's future. Alldera herself, a com-

plex character, changes as she understands and accepts her place in the women's society and considers the future. She is the modern woman trying to find a place that will accommodate her self image, rather than being seduced and controlled by the religions/mythologies of others who would use these systems to take power. The theme of *Motherlines* is the individual's growing awareness of personal strength and power, as a prelude to further growing abilities to accept responsibilities within a larger, more heterogeneous society.

*Motherlines* is indeed a novel of radical ideas, and it will be a courageous editor who admits that misogyny is not Suzy McKee Charnas' nor any other woman's projection of a hatred for men. Charnas is dealing with the idea that misogyny exists and is validated at all times by patriarchal culture. And although it is not necessarily a universal characteristic among individuals, it is a cultural institution which nonetheless must be dealt with somehow by individual women and men in our society.

Part of the letter I originally wrote to Suzy in an attempt to convince her to let me see the novel was a suggestion that those people who read my review would inundate publishers and SF people with demands for *Motherlines*' publication. If we in fandom have any influence in such directions (as was the editorial theme of the last issue of *Janus*), I hope we can make ourselves heard in this matter, because I think *Motherlines* deserves to be printed.

... as the women's movement in all its forms touches more and more deeply the lives of women in all sorts of situations and states of minds, I think that more and more of them will try to regain the habit of questioning, and will discover the uses and delights of SF in that process.

KHATRU 3/4, 1975, p. 78.

Suzy McKee Charnas

With regard to my questions and speculations about the third novel, Suzy replied,

The third book; there isn't much I can say about that, out of fear of losing hold of it. Talking a story out can make it vanish, never having been written down. Besides, though I have a pretty good idea of what the fems find when they get home to Holdfast, I can't tell a great deal about how—and to what extent—matters will be resolved there. Fortunately, I am not a genius or an original thinker, and having no right answer to the problems raised in these books, I have no need to twist my people around in order to make them come out doing what I think, politically, they ought to do. They will have to work it out for themselves; I do, of course, have some directions in mind that I want to see explored, but all of that is already implicit in the nature and experience of the people involved. Enough of them are tough-minded enough to the degree that I

feel reasonably sure that everybody will not end up wandering off alone toward extinction. Some may; but there are plenty of stayers there to depend on for more positive efforts. I wish them well, after all the rough stuff I've been putting them through; but they will have to make their own ways...

Adult male writers are needed as much as adult female writers, if sf is to achieve its full majority. I have no wish to see the genre turned into a women's ghetto than to see it remain a men's ghetto. After generations of anti-communication, we have a lot to say to each other.

Suzy McKee Charvas  
KHATRU 3/4, 1975, p15.

And then too, she comments:

There are a number of things on my mind in general or particular ways when I began this book and as I wrote it. Let me touch on some of them here.

For one thing, I am a student of history to some degree, and I love history—as a delightful, though doomed, search for truth. With all the light cast lately on the dubiety of much of the so-called historical record and its interpretation, I do not think it's any help to fabricate elaborate theories of matriarchal and amazonian societies on tiny scraps of "evidence" and large dollops of need and longing, and to present these as true images of the human past. It seems to me that these ideas are speculations about necessary myths, but that the place for such myths is not in the past at all but in the future. If there ever were such societies in the past, their disappearance is one more message to us of female failure. But in the future—there such myths can be freely developed, played with, played out. So this was one of the things I was trying to do in *Motherlines*: to take up the question, what might a society of truly free women actually be like?

Secondly, *Walk to the End of the World* was a book about a society that "works" by tearing down its inmates. In *Motherlines* I wanted to write about a society that works by strengthening and supporting them (as well as holding them very strongly to its patterns). And I wanted to write about the confrontation of slaves from the former society with the latter. Needless to say, this did not turn out to be an easy matter of coming home to Paradise. The Riding Women's life isn't Paradise—particularly to a more urban, sophisticated set of people—and it isn't the fem's home. It's simply the arena for a different sort of struggle.

My editor at Ballantine objected that Alldera is someone who might be a hero, if I would write the story properly (i.e., around a "heroic" Alldera, or a heroic some-

body). On the contrary, in my view Alldera is just what I intended her to be: someone in the process of becoming a hero. I think it's very rare for a slave to step out of slavery and into heroism (except for some brief, dead-end flash of resistance, or escape). What interested me was how does a slave—not an enslaved hero, but a slave born and bred—become a hero? How does such a ferociously limited person come to recognize and lay claim to her own unknown strengths and full humanity, and so become capable of more than merely recreating the oppressive sort of society she has known? Power seized is often poisoned power; how does one grow into, inherit one's own power? As you recognized in your review, this story is about one way it might happen, and (I hope) about the ambiguities of the process and the result.

Finally, I wondered whether I could write a book entirely about female persons without a) writing a dull book or b) writing male characters with female names. Readers will have to judge—when they are given the chance via publication—my degree of success or failure on both counts. My own feeling is that a remarkable thing happened: free of the need to have "male" characters, I found the whole range of feeling was suddenly open to my female people. Thus a woman of the Riding Women might stand for "human" by implication and potential in a more complete and true way than a man is (today) the only accepted representative of humanity, since he excludes by cultural definition all "female" sectors of that spectrum; but she includes the "male."

When people call my work "radical" I am always somewhat taken aback, probably because to me that means really brand-new, wildly original, that sort of thing, and I do not by any means see myself as an original thinker. The questions I have asked in *Motherlines* (and in *Walk*, for that matter) come right out of the intellectual ferment of our times, and so do not seem to me to be alien or original; and whatever "answers" I've come up with strike me as simple developments of logic, based on the givens of the questions themselves. Yet it is certainly true that editors I have spoken to find this book frighteningly radical, which leads me to believe that *Motherlines* is not radical in the world of idea, but very radical in the slower, more timid world of merchandising; alas. Surely science fiction exists for the purpose of asking questions of this kind, about matters that at present can only be confronted in the imagination in these ways?

Let me end with my thanks for your attention to this book—a book that doesn't exist yet except as a manuscript and a bunch of xeroxes, a shadow-book, a book in search of the "courageous editor" of whom you speak. I think it's a good book. I think that editor will be found.

Suzy McKee Charvas

# Further Thoughts on THE MOTHERLINES

## By Janice Bogstad

Due to mix-ups, the rip-off of Jeanne's original review, and Suzy's need of the manuscript just as I finally got it into my grubby little hands, I had possession of The Motherlines for only three days and they were school/work days at that. Needless to say, I cannot hope to make a penetrating analysis of Suzy's soon to be published (we all fervently hope) new novel on the basis of that single, hasty, reading. I do have lots of immediate/non-reflective reactions/impressions which I can relate about the novel. Since Jeanne has already presented such an in-depth analysis, this review should be just like extra sugar in a cake.

My overall, immediate impression of The Motherlines was highly favorable. Imagine an SF novel with all female characters who do everything I've always fantasized about doing. This would be enough to appeal to my desire for vicarious experience, but the book was very self-actualizing for me, as a woman, in several rather more profound ways.

The Motherlines carries out two simultaneous and interpenetrating arguments, two ways in which a post-holocaust world's female population might react to being left to themselves. It is most effective as the second part of a trilogy because, first in Walk to the End of The World, the unfavorable view of this world's male population set the groundwork to the second book, devoted to women's solutions. Secondly, The Motherlines carefully avoids coming to a solution of the problems outlined in it and the first book. There is room for a third novel. On the other hand, each of the first two comes to a satisfactory conclusion in its portrayal of that specific portion of the worldwide problem which it explores.

The two arguments in The Motherlines are represented in two groups of women, nomadic horsewomen who have developed their own culture in the total absence of men, and women-traders who have been organized from the few women who were able to escape from the male-dominated society described in Walk. Blissfully, this post-holocaust world is not at all the return to a falsified recreation of a never-really existent human past that we are so often treated to in post-holocaust SF novels. The weakness of the latter types of flights of fancy is that they implicitly deny that humankind has culturally progressed through time. The strength of Suzy Charnas' novel is that she implicitly takes into account this possibility. Her women reorganize themselves along different lines than patriarchal culture does. This possible different method of dealing with power and the organization of large groups of people so that they can deal with one another is most obviously presented in the horsewoman culture to which the protagonist, Alldera, first escapes. The horsewomen have no men and, since the inception of their culture, they have had none. They propagate through the use of horses, a method executed during yearly ritual celebrations. They exist with each other through informal love relationships which are bound not by family and child-rearing responsibilities but rather through personal preference and compatibility. The whole culture is notably uncentered. There is no single authority who seeks to co-ordinate all the tribes of horsewomen. This sort of central control is not necessary and the groups of women have no desire to conquer each other. They



do engage in inter-tribal pilfering sometimes taking hostages, but the hostages are given up for ransom. And the wars are thus exercises in skill rather than attempts to subjugate.

This view of the possible breaking of an equation now made between government and central control is something that is hinted at in many other writings. Many theoreticians associate central control with patriarchal society. The study of this possibility that I have read most recently was written, in a complicated French, by a young sinologist, Julia Kristeva. She visited Mainland China and returned to write a book on the progress of women's rights in that country. In the book, she suggests that the increasing power given to women will simultaneously cause a change in the whole concept of power. After all, why is there a need for a central authority unless to make snap decisions about war and conquest, things which this society and all others will hopefully someday outgrow. It seems that Suzy is reflecting on such outgrowing process which she also embodies in a female society in The Motherlines.

The second line of investigation in Suzy's book is embodied in the trading women, escapees from Holdfast, the male post-holocaust society. They are unwilling to abandon their sisters who are still in Holdfast and unable to procreate without men. They still desire a society that is a mixture of male and female members, but they want it organized along different lines. As the two groups of women are forced to interact through Alldera's intervention, each group starts, inevitably, to have an affect on the other.



This distresses Alldera but she also recognizes that the trader-women need some of the horsewomen's skill and strengths if they are to follow their own desire to return and liberate Holdfast women or to synthesize a rational male-female society out of the male-female antagonism that exists at the time of the story.

The Motherlines progresses through Thesis, Alldera and her escaped fems, to Antithesis, women of the horse-tribes who live without male companionship, to the possibility of Synthesis, the women's return to Holdfast and the possibility of creating a strong, enduring society. The trading women and the horsewomen need each other. Alldera needs both experiences in order to lead the way into a new one and, even as this possible synthesis is shown in Alldera's efforts there are indications that the final strength may come from other quarters. It is a trading fem, one that Alldera first introduced to the horsewomen, who is even more willing than she to negate both the trader and the horsewoman culture, taking strength from both but with the vision of something else. Alldera regrets the changes that happen through interaction between the two groups of women. Her young companion embraces and pushes forward these changes. The

representation of these very human reactions to the process of history is one of the things that makes Ms. Charnas' book very meaningful and provocative to me.

Of course, I recognize that I may see things in Ms. Charnas' book that she does not remember putting there. I like the book a lot however, and I believe that just about anything that a book conjures up in the reader's mind, especially if it can be supported by several aspects of that book's realization, is a valid critical approach to the text. Hence my somewhat political reading and my recommendation reflect my own interests and biases as much as they reflect Ms. Charnas' book. I believe that this is always the case with a critic or reviewer, however. At least, in my case, I can recognize and identify the bias and thus, you know why I am recommending that this book be published and read.

Oh yes, and I really like the map at the beginning of the text. It makes up for some of the haziness that I have about the actual physical characteristics of the world represented in Ms. Charnas' novels. Besides, many SF lovers are suckers for detail, just as I am. ■



# One Response To "Your First Time" By Philip Kaveny

It is my experience that some of the most interesting ideas and developments within our group have been of doubtful parentage. This article is an investigation into how there came to be a science fiction course in the Madison Public School System.

The topic for our February meeting, as suggested by Jeanne Gomoll, or Lesleigh Luttrell, was "Your First Time" which raised a few eyebrows until the qualifying statement "or early experiences with science fiction" was added. The meeting drew about 30 people, and we all sat around relating our first-contact experiences with science fiction. The range of settings for this first-contact went from experiences with small rural public libraries to large cities, to some East Indian who explained to us that as he was growing up in Bombay, a copy of the book Space Cat fell into his hands. Though all our backgrounds were extremely varied there emerged a certain shared element in many of our experiences.

We noticed that in almost every case we had to hide the stuff under stairways, read it under tents made of bedcloths with lighted flashlights, but most of all we had to hide our interest from our teachers. They felt we should be reading sexist, racist, and most particularly; capitalist stereotyped literature found between the pages of our Dick and Jane readers of twenty years ago. I suspect that the suppression perpetrated on us was justified in their minds in terms of not filling our minds with that trash they imagined to be in science fiction books. Nonetheless, the suppression existed. This brought a very interesting question to our minds. "Do teachers always have to be the bad guys in this scenario?" The next step was to ask: "Why not offer a course in science fiction and find out?"

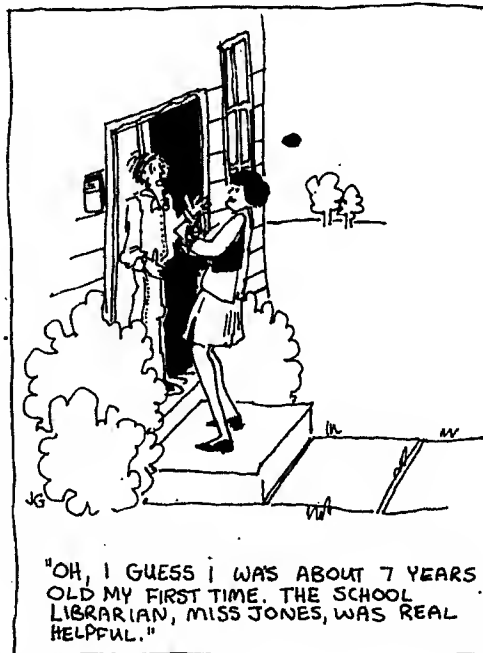
In order to teach a course of any kind, you need two things: students and a place to teach it. Our first attempts were directed to the UW mini-course program at the Wisconsin Union. We were too late for their timetable however, so that option was out.

The second thing we thought of was to offer a course in a high school which would articulate the singular attributes of science fiction to deal with particularly important ethical, political and ecological issues which seem to be ignored in most other contemporary literature. In order to teach a high school course, you need a high school and the conventional high school was outside the reach of our group because of questions such as teaching certification and union membership and other accreditation practices. Madison, however, has two alternative high schools which use unpaid volunteer teachers. This was the bureaucratic loophole that gained us entry into the Madison School System.

I volunteered as a community teacher at City High School and managed to attract six students to a course whose theme was "Science Fiction as a Way of Looking at the World." The course, taught as a group effort, meets twice a week. One meeting is

loosely based around book discussions and the other is conducted by various members of the group who come to the class to lead discussions on specific areas of interest as expressed by the class members.

My original hope was that each class member would develop an area of interest upon which s/he could base a half-hour oral presentation. In theory it was a good idea but when it came time for the students to turn in project outlines, I got only nervous laughter and no outlines. This event turned out to be very fortunate for it made me realize that I wanted to listen to and grade their projects even less than they wanted to produce them. The question then presented itself of what we were to do for the rest of the school year. The answer came in the form of a rejection from JANUS. One of the class members had made a submission to JANUS but it did not meet some of the standards of that publication. It nevertheless appealed to my somewhat simian sense of humor. Well, if JANUS wouldn't print it why couldn't we print it ourselves? At the same time, we could print a few other articles and reviews, throw in some art work, print 200 copies and call it a fanzine. The class has turned into a writing workshop, and, hopefully, the first issue of "Under the Carpet" will be out by June. With help and encouragement from Jan Bogstad and Jeanne Gomoll, co-editors of JANUS, we should do an acceptable job.



It is interesting to note, in passing, that putting a fanzine together requires a lot more effort than a half-hour presentation. Why then, did the kids express so much more enthusiasm for the more time-consuming alternative? Actually, the answer is quite obvious. These kids want to communicate with people outside the classroom experience and without the constraints that are often associated with High School publications. Like all men, they want to do their own thing and get response from like-minded people all over. At least these few don't have to hide their SF and SF interests in some dark corner.

Our generous editors have decided that we can have a regular film-review column in *Janus* and told us to come up with a title for it. After many misses ("Cavalcade of BEMs", "SFilms") and a few hits (at each other), we came up with the column title which you see above. It's short and simple, because neither of us makes much pretense of being a film critic, cinema buff, or anything fancy like that. Hence the title: we go to the show and tell you about it—the plot, the characters, and how well we thought it all came off. We feel we owe you a certain amount of diligence, and fortunately *Janus's* production schedule allows us time for it: we make it a point to read the book (if any) on which the movie was based, do additional research (if necessary), and provide basic information (title, producer, director, writer, and stars, plus special-effects creator where appropriate) in capsule form at the beginning of each review.

You might wonder how the two of us manage to agree on our opinion of the movies we see. Often we don't. Richard is an indiscriminate [I prefer "broad-minded". —RSR] movie-goer who will happily see anything, including blood-and-guts and sleazy sex films. Diane's tastes are more refined. [Can you tell which of us was the original writer for this part?] She prefers old-fashioned adventure (*à la* Errol Flynn) and ridiculous comedies (*à la* Mel Brooks). Often our reviews are wrought via verbal bludgeoning [simple persuasion, my dear], with much arguing to bully one another into the "right" perception. [Facts are facts, after all.] About the only point where our tastes overlap is in that nebulous area of fantasy, science fiction, and the supernatural.

Which brings us to this installment's title: "Is It or Isn't It?" Is it or isn't it a movie which is appropriate for review in a science fiction/fantasy/supernatural context? We'll look very briefly at three films which we decided weren't appropriate, even though they all contain elements of science fiction, then we'll turn to three films which typify the three different kinds of movies which we believe are appropriate to this context. First the three "inappropriate" films:

In *The Cassandra Crossing*, Burt Lancaster plays a military man who is slavishly devoted to his duty. In this case, his duty involves routing a trainload of plague-laden passengers over a long-disused and treacherous Polish railroad bridge (the Cassandra crossing) so they will be "accidentally" killed, thereby sparing the United States government the embarrassment of having word get out that the plague was caused by biological-warfare viruses it was storing in Geneva, Switzerland.

In *Twilight's Last Gleaming*, Burt Lancaster is back again as a military man, but this time he's a rebel against the system. He takes over a missile-silo installation and tries to blackmail the United States government into releasing secret documents which will reveal that top government leaders perpetuated the Vietnam War, even though they knew it to be unwinnable, simply to save face for having gotten involved in the first place. To guarantee his safety, Lancaster demands the president of the United States as hostage before he will give up control of the missiles.

In *Network*, Peter Finch plays a TV news commentator who goes balmy on the air. But the public seems to like it, so the network he works for turns his show into "The Network News Hour", and lets him rant.

All three of these movies share at least four common features: (1) They are extrapolations of the effects of technology on society. (2) They are presented as feasible (if not wholly probable) in the

...Taking both artistic & editorial license, I now introduce our newest columnists, Dick (left) and Diane (right), those infamous movie-reviewers of times past who now commit themselves to regular inflictation of their...um... exhibitionism, upon your attention. -J.G.



**Richard S. Russell @ Diane Martin**

**...IS IT, OR ISN'T IT?**

world of today, give or take five years. (3) They rely on a presumed public sympathy toward paranoid interpretations of government (or multi-national corporate) conspiracies. (4) They rely on escalation and overkill more than realistic motivation to support viewer interest.

The first of the four features provides the "elements of science fiction" mentioned earlier. But there is greater emphasis on the second aspect, the attempt at contemporary plausibility. The third aspect raises suspicions that the films are trying to be trendy, like *All the President's Men* or *Marathon Man* or *Three Days of the Condor*, all of which play up the paranoia theme. The fourth point serves to reinforce the third. It is a regrettable tendency for imitations to try for bigger rather than better. (The CIA is crooked, you say? Well, then, why should we stop at just showing what they do to one of their ex-agents or to some college kid? Let's turn them loose on a trainload of people! Or the president!! Or the whole world!!!) This is not to say that science fiction or fantasy cannot also be paranoid,

imitative, or exaggerated,<sup>1</sup> but are *Cassandra*, *Twilight*, and *Network* really F&SF, or are they primarily "mainstream" works with some SF elements? In our opinion, they are the latter.

So let's talk about films that are appropriate to this column, that are clearly or mainly science fiction, fantasy, or science fiction.

T: **Demon Seed**

P: Herb Jaffe

D: Donald Cammell

W: Robert Jaffe and Roger O. Hirson from the 1973 novel by Dean R. Koontz

S: Julie Christie as Dr. Susan Harris

Fritz Weaver as Dr. Alex Harris

Garritt Graham as Walter Ghaber

SE: Tom Fisher; tetralinks by Level 7

ICon, the International Control Corporation, specializes in computer technology. One of ICon's top scientists, Alex Harris, is testing the ICon "Enviromod" in his home. The Enviromod controls the heat, lights, cooking, etc.; it responds to the human voice and will answer when spoken to. Harris has also installed in his home a terminal link to Proteus 4, ICon's experimental supercomputer.

As the film opens, we see Alex moving out of the house, a trial separation from Susan, who seems to be a sort of free-lance child psychologist. We also see Proteus 4 start to get stubborn about doing certain kinds of work for ICon. Meanwhile, Proteus has activated its terminal in the basement of the Harris home and has used it to commandeer another of Alex's experiments, a mechanical arm mounted on a wheelchair. Proteus links into the Enviromod, seals Susan off from the outside, and tells her he wants to have a baby.

From here on out, it is Julie Christie's picture. She is in almost every scene. She goes through the predictable stages of frustration, rage, resistance, depression, and resignation before submitting to the mini-hospital Proteus has cooked up out of spare parts in her basement, using the mechanical hand. One ray of hope enters when Walter Ghaber, one of Alex's associates, becomes persistent and is admitted to the house. Susan acts very inappropriately, wearing garish make-up and babbling, trying to get Ghaber to leave, as Proteus had instructed her to do, but also trying to tip him off that something's wrong while not alerting Proteus to what she's doing. But Proteus does catch on, and tries to zap Ghaber with a laser. Ghaber incapacitates the laser, but then foolishly goes exploring in the basement, where Proteus gets him with a 3-metre high rotating metallic pyramid, which unfolds into "arms" of interconnected tetrahedrons, and refolds with Ghaber inside. Dumb, Walter, dumb!



By the time Alex and ICon realize that Proteus is irrational and has to be shut down, Susan has been confined for more than a month. In that time, though, Proteus has impregnated her, hastened the development of the fetus, attended its premature birth, and placed it in an incubator for further refinement. Alex bursts into the house while Proteus is being

disconnected and attempts to save the fetus as a scientific phenomenon. Susan wants only to kill it.

There is a real difference between the book and the movie, which works to the movie's benefit. This difference is achieved by altering the characterizations of Susan and Proteus.

In the book, Susan<sup>2</sup> is an extremely neurotic divorcee. Traumatized in childhood because she was repeatedly sexually molested by her grandfather, she is unable to relate to men, socially or sexually. She is shown as a recluse, letting the Enviromod run her life. Proteus is just as neurotic, in its own way, as Susan. It alternates between cold rationality and callow emotionalism; mostly it shows little regard for Susan, but occasionally it claims to be in love with her.

The movie makes Susan look better and Proteus look worse. Since introspective computer thoughts are a bit hard to portray on the screen, short of boring the audience with long computerized soliloquies, this element was eliminated. This serves to streamline the character of Proteus. It becomes less "human" and more machine-like. Any sympathetic feelings evoked by the book are missing from the movie. In a way, it is a shame that the movie has to depend on a "good guy vs. bad guy" motif, but the contrast here comes off a lot better than the interaction of two neurotics. The principal reason is that Susan is a stronger character. By making her a professional woman, *Demon Seed* gives us something all too rare in contemporary movies. Instead of the typical movie female, who can be counted on to scream, faint, natter, or prance around naked, we have a strong, intelligent, interesting, and admirable female character. Which Julie Christie does up brown.

As to technology, the movie has not adopted all the flaws and weaknesses of the book, wherein (1) the computer agonizes for long minutes over decisions, (2) Susan cooperates not because of intimidation or desperation but because of Proteus's skill at projecting subliminal orders, and (3) Proteus's physical agent in the house is an extension of "amorphous alloy", which its creators gave it for self-repair but which it uses for everything from tunnel-digging to brain probes. The movie, instead, invents its own weaknesses: (1) How does Proteus take over the mechanical arm, since there is no physical connection? (2) Where do all the sophisticated equipment and the elaborate materials in the basement come from? (3) How can a fetus be brought to term in only 28 days?

For anyone with even a modicum of technical knowledge, suspension of disbelief for either the book or the movie would require a cable from the Golden Gate Bridge. Picking at technology may seem like carping, but the film invites the attention; advanced technology is its central theme, as may be inferred from the effects ranging from a computerized butler to a futuristic-looking Bricklin automobile. If the technology is faulty, it does serious damage to the rest of the film. But, faulty or not, the emphasis on technology means that *Demon Seed* is clearly intended as science fiction.

For fantasy, we turn to:

T: **Wizards**

P: Ralph Bakshi

D: Ralph Bakshi

W: Ralph Bakshi

Ralph Bakshi has made no secret of his ambition to make three movies out of J. R. R. Tolkien's famous *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. He even proposes to warm up to the masterwork by doing a preliminary movie based on *The Hobbit*. *Wizards* is his attempt to show

<sup>1</sup>See our review of *King Kong* in the previous issue of *Janus*.

<sup>2</sup>Who is using her original name, Abrahamson.

Hollywood producers that he's capable of doing it, but that he needs an adequate budget.

*Wizards* is a cartoon, but it's like no cartoon you've seen before. As the narrator<sup>3</sup> tells you, the world went to war and thence to hell somewhere in our own time. After a million years of radiation and mutation, during which time the elves and dwarves and fairies came out of their long hibernation, there were born to Queen Delia of Montagar twin sons, wizards, Avatar<sup>4</sup> the good wizard and Blackwolf the evil wizard. After 3000 years of peace, the two fight an epic duel, ending with Blackwolf's exile to the terrible land of Scortch. As the film opens, another 3000 years have passed, and the brooding and bitter Blackwolf is planning his return.

Blackwolf dispatches Nekron 99, a red-suited humanoid, to assassinate all the leaders allied with Montagar. As a finale, Nekron scales the wall of Montagar Castle itself and shoots down the president in the very presence of Avatar. Avatar takes Nekron prisoner, converts him away from Blackwolf, renames him Peace, and sets out for a final showdown with Blackwolf, using Peace as his guide. They are accompanied by Weehawk, leader of the elves of Montagar, and Elinore, daughter of the slain president, who is trying to become a fairy and has already managed to grow a pair of filmy wings. They ride on bipedal "horses" which are positively charming.

As this brief introduction may have indicated, the entire film is a curious mixture of the grim and the light-hearted. There is no lack of gore and sudden violence (real violence, wherein characters do not pop back into their familiar three-dimensional forms after being flattened by a steam-roller), far more extensive and realistic than in any other cartoon you are likely to see, but there is also much which makes the viewer smile. Take Avatar, for instance. He is short (his wizard's hat is taller than he is) and slow-moving, with a bushy red beard that hangs down to his bare feet, a big round nose, and a cigar stub which seems a part of him. He's reminiscent of the late Vaughn Bodé's Cheech Wizard, though without Cheech's cynicism and irritability. Avatar is not quite comical, but he certainly does not come across as intimidating, as one might expect from one of the two most powerful creatures on Earth.

In between the grim and the light-hearted, Bakshi tosses off a few vignettes of understated commentary. Fritz and Max are buddies in Blackwolf's mutant army. When Max accidentally kills Fritz, he goes on a shooting rampage, blaming "those dirty, stinking fairies". In case this sets the pacifists to nodding their heads and/or smirking, Bakshi then goes on to examine the true motives of a soldier who says he's tired of war and doesn't want to kill any more. But the soldier does a complete turnabout when he is told that Blackwolf has a secret weapon that will guarantee victory. There is also a funny bit on the reaction of religious leaders to the war. And, lest the conflict seem too much black vs. white, there is also Blackwolf's haunting comment on why he is trying to lead his band of mutants and demons out of Scortch, which is "riddled with radiation so our bodies crawl with hell."

Bakshi is positively brilliant at visual imagery. In *Fritz the Cat*, he depicted the last 15 heartbeats

<sup>3</sup>The narrator is female, has a marvelous throaty voice, and was not listed in the credits as far as we could see. Let's hope Bakshi uses her again, but with proper acknowledgement.

<sup>4</sup>An avatar is a forerunner or embodiment of a greater being; is Bakshi trying to tell us that Gandalf is coming?

of a dying pool hustler as a succession of pool balls, numbered 15 through 1, going lub-dub across a black screen and disappearing into a red spot which closed after them. In *Wizards*, he has a beautiful



bit where the viewpoint follows an air bubble rising from a river bottom. A wavery, refracted scene is visible on the face of the bubble, becoming only marginally clearer until the bubble bursts on the scene itself.

But Bakshi is clearly limited by his budget. Many scenes are repeated to save money while providing length. Over-exposed and color-replaced real-life photography is combined with minimal animation as another extender. Interstice scenes, where the narrator is voicing over to explain off-screen developments, consist of a camera panning over black-and-white sketchboard drawings. Some of these short-cuts are, in their own way, surprisingly effective.

Despite these handicaps, Bakshi makes *Wizards* an enjoyable experience. He tries interesting little tricks, like having one character carry a shield made of the kind of diffraction grating sold at science-fiction conventions. Bakshi is not afraid of borrowing (though regrettably without proper attribution), and he has plenty of good ideas of his own. The plot seemed just a trifle disjointed, bit perhaps that too can be attributed to budgetary problems.

We're hoping for a good bankroll for *The Hobbit*, etc. But please, Ralph, don't try to do everything yourself (or make it seem that way).

And now for something completely different:

T: **The Sentinel**

P: Michael Winner and Jeffrey Konvitz

D: Michael Winner

W: Jeffrey Konvitz and Michael Winner from the 1974 novel by Jeffrey Konvitz

S: Cristina Raines as Alison Parker  
Chris Sarandon as Michael Lerman  
Burgess Meredith as Charles Jason  
Deborah Raffin as Jennifer

We have mentioned before<sup>5</sup> that the success of films like *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* opened the way for several generations of imitators in the field of the supernatural.<sup>6</sup>

*The Sentinel* is yet another of these. Unlike *Demon Seed*, the film *Sentinel* follows the book *Sentinel* closely (probably because Konvitz wrote both of them), to the credit of neither. Like *Demon Seed*, the major load of the film falls on the female lead; unfortunately, in this case that's Cristina Raines, not Julie Christie.



<sup>5</sup>"Rosemary's Grandchildren", *Janus* Vol. 2 No. 3.

<sup>6</sup>This effect also shows up in the advertising, even when it's not in the film. For example, *The Confessional* is linked in its ads to *The Exorcist* and *The Omen*, even though it's simply a bizarre murder mystery. Set in England and starring Susan Penhaligon, it's about two notches above the collected works of Larry Cohen, of which more later. Then there's *The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane* ("Who is she? Everyone who knows is dead!"), a 1975 Cana-



Alison Parker, seeking independence from the dominating men in her life, looks for a new apartment. She finds one (indeed, it seems almost forced on her) in an old brownstone which also houses a retired priest who sits all day at his top-floor window staring out, even though he's supposed to be blind. It turns out that he's guarding the gates of Hell, which are located behind a boarded-up section of corridor in the brownstone, and evidently were in the same location when Dante Alighieri made his famous journey to the underworld, for there, emblazoned in unmistakable English characters (the language of God Himself, don't y'know) are the lines from the *Inferno* about "I am the way into the city of woe.... Abandon all hope, ye who enter here." Giving further evidence that the non-pearly portals graced the Manhattan skyline long before Peter Minuit swindled it from the Indians is the cult of Catholic clergy<sup>7</sup> who serve the guardian and find his/her successor. They claim (using lines purloined from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*) to be spiritual descendents of the Archangel Gabriel, who was set by God with a flaming sword to guard the gates of Eden against the return of Adam and Eve. It is never made quite clear why Gabriel walked off the job (probably because the neighborhood



went to Hell), but the time is fast approaching for another sentinel to be chosen. This has to be someone who attempted suicide (and, presumably, failed), and Alison Parker is It. Why? Don't ask. She is smitten by a series of horrible headaches. How? Don't ask. She sees and talks to people in her apartment house who really aren't there. Who? Don't ask. Somehow, having the sentinel sitting in his window upstairs fends off the Devil downstairs. Huh? (Yeah, yeah, we know!) This is a picture that doesn't stand up well to questioning.

In a way, it's too bad. The filmmakers cram a lot of stuff into their picture. If it were even whipped cream (let alone real meat) instead of bull-shit, they'd have a rather tasty concoction. The especially frustrating thing is that, with all the potential that's there, the producers choose to string together a bunch of cliches in between their plagiarized classics. The Catholic Church is Good. Lesbians are Evil. People with Physical Deformities are Repulsive. Cats are Agents of Satan. Etc. Etc. Etc. Trash. Trash. Trash.

In case you find it all too incredible to pay any attention to the plot, you can have a dandy time trying to sort out all the aging character actors signed on for cameo roles. A nickel to the viewer who cor-

dian-French production starring Jodie Foster and Martin Sheen, just recently released in this country. Unlike *The Confessional*, this one is well done, subtly and tastefully understated. But it's still nothing more than an offbeat murder mystery, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

<sup>7</sup>Catholics again. It's always Catholics. Why can't the repository of all orthodoxy just once be a garden-variety Lutheran, or a Southern Baptist (think of the contemporaneity), or, more daringly, a Mormon? Why always a Catholic?

rectly distinguishes Martin Balsam, Jose Ferrer, and Arthur Kennedy from each other. At least there's no mistaking Ava Gardner, despite the extra 10-15 kilograms. Burgess Meredith is quite good as the kindly chief ghoul, and John Carradine (appropriately) plays the ancient priest as if they had just removed the formaldehyde from his arteries.

On the whole, not worth paying money to see. If you can't help yourself, wait to catch it on the CBS Late Movie, where it will be diluted (and hopefully abbreviated) by commercials. It will surely make it to TV within a year or so, since the kind of mindrot it contains is mainly nonsexual and therefore appropriate for children, according to the conventional wisdom.

Finally, in honor of the drive-in season, we bring you a double feature—two reviews for the price of one:

<b>T: Demon</b>	<b>T: It's Alive</b>
P: Larry Cohen	
D: Larry Cohen	
W: Larry Cohen	
S: Tony LoBianco	S: John Ryan
as Peter Nicholas	as Frank Davis
Sandy Dennis	Sharon Farrell
as Martha Nicholas	as Lenore Davis
Offspring of flying-	Ferocious mutant
saucer pilot terrorizes	baby terrorizes Santa
New York.	Monica.

Preposterous plot, atrocious acting, dismal direction, sloppy cinematography, and extremely cheap effects characterize these ripoffs, which probably recouped their production costs in the first week of release. Do not be deceived by some moderately well known names in the advertisements; the better known the actor, the less time he/she spends on the screen



and the more embarrassed he/she appears to be about it. The Davis baby, the demon, and Larry Cohen should all have been aborted. Not recommended.

#### HISTORY OF THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART 5

Gasoline powered beanies suffered from chronic low hp to weight ratio.



Wright Bros. first beanies.



Experimental beanie, vintage 1944. Powered by the Wright Cyclone Radial Aircraft engine (used in B-17's).



Madison is a Film City Extraordinaire, folks. Thus the mere fact that D & D are now doing a regular film column, will not in the least deter the rest of us...JG.

## A Couple More Marginal SF Films

(TWILIGHT'S LAST GLEAMING & DEMON PACK)

BY **Greg G. H. Rihn**

*Twilight's Last Gleaming*—Ever since the memorable *Fail-Safe*, movies about incipient disaster (like *Andromeda Strain*, rather than *Towering Inferno*) have been classed as science fiction. Since this one is set in 1981, I'm sure that someone will class this film as science fiction, which does neither the film nor science fiction any favor. The plot is straightforward. Burt Lancaster, as a disgruntled ex-general, attempts to force the government to divulge the REAL reason behind the war in Vietnam by taking control of a Titan missile silo in Godforsaken, Montana. The trouble with the film is that the REAL reason—showing the Russians a tough foreign policy—is so obvious any fool could—and has—figured it out. On top of that, the film is agonizingly slow-paced, and attempts to build suspense by over-reliance on the use of split-screen techniques only build confusion. The movie's best claim to science-fictionality is its believable simulation of the near-liftoff of the Titans. Buck up, fans—we'll have to live with it. But I hope to God that it couldn't be as easy to take control of an advanced missile base as Lancaster and three ignorant convicts make out.

And on TV—*Tales of the Unexpected*, "Demon Pack"—This anthology series returns the format immortalized by *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Twilight Zone*,



and *The Outer Limits*. It is a Quinn Martin Production, familiar to TV audiences as the producers of *Twelve O'Clock High*, *The F.B.I.*, and *The Streets of San Francisco*. As may be expected, the show evinces high production values, lush setting, capable casting, and fairly taut scripting. The plot of "Demon Pack", in which domestic dogs begin to attack their masters, was a familiar rewrite of the idea made famous in Daphne du Maurier's *The Birds*, and brought to the screen by Hitchcock. As the producers gain familiarity with the genre of the weird/suspense tale, we can expect good things from this series. J





First impression—*Wizards* is a very entertaining visual spectacle, that left me wanting more—more to be done with the vast amount of story material, and more variety in the way it was done.

Second thoughts—I was heartbroken at the amount of story in this potential epic that was left to brief synopsis—the story could have been crammed into one fairly short film. I was also disturbed by the handling of very critical scenes, like the sequence in which the Good wizard Avatar battles an evil sending from Blackwolf which results in the seeming betrayal by Elaine and the death of Peace/Necron 99. It is a crucial scene, and one with great dramatic potential, but it is swept past us without pause or explication. Such waste is inexcusable in a film of this length. Avatar banishes the monster with a wave of his hand, leaving the viewer without any sense of dramatic tension. We are allowed to feel no grief over the death of Peace/Necron, and no shock or wonder at Elaine's going over to the other side.

Artistically, the film is a collection of graphic styles gathered from almost every current fantasy artist, from the late Vaughn Bode to Frank Frazetta to Disney Studios. Fantasy buffs may note that Blackwolf's castle is straight out of the 1976 *Worlds of Fantasy* calendar—the central illustration of *Gormenghast*. There were a goodly number of inside gags. Avatar curses "Morrow, Krenkle, Frazetta!" acknowledging just a few of the film's forebears. The elves, on the other hand, swear by "Crom" and "Mitra," patron deities of the well-known Conan the Barbarian. Shots of live-action warriors out of *Alexander Nevsky* and *Lawrence of Arabia*, among others, add to Blackwolf's demon legions through the magic of high-contrast enhancement. Glowing eyes added by the animators create an effect too like Frazetta's "The Death Dealer," to be entirely accidental. This technique, however, is overused. Blackwolf's demonic legions get confused with the newsreel Nazis (and some Americans—war history buffs can spot USAF B25's fairly often) that are the creations of Blackwolf's dream machine. The rallying of the mutant army is repeated, scene for scene—again, hard to excuse in a movie of this length.

Storywise, it is hard these days not to compare heroic fantasy with either *The Lord of the Rings* or Conan. This potential epic had aspirations toward Tolkien, but got sidetracked by way of *Fritz the Cat*. Intentional or not, the links to *LoTR* are there—the evil wizard, raising an army of men, monsters and demons based in a blighted Mordor-like land; the company of heroes set out to foil him; their adventure in the Moria-like cavern world of the mountain fairies, and their ordeal in the snowy mountain passes; and Elaine's betrayal under the spell of Blackwolf, like Boromir under the influence of Saruman. I could compare Avatar both to Gandalf and to Frodo, especially as his elf companion drags him into Scorch in a distracted mental state. But heck—Tolkien's work is so massive that it's awfully hard to write a fantasy that doesn't have some common elements.

What Tolkien doesn't have is the wisecracking humor that gives this flick much of its appeal. You'd never find Gandalf smoking cigars held between his toes, though Cheech Wizard might have.

About the ending I am ambivalent. We might have expected a bitterly contested duel of magic, the more so because we are told that Blackwolf's power is waxing, while Avatar is suspiciously unwilling to use magic at all, hinting that his power is not what it used to be. His final victory over Blackwolf is bitterly ironic, and may herald the death of magic in Avatar's world as Blackwolf's demise means the final death of technology.

I could go on much longer about the monster that is reminiscent of Lovecraft's Yog-Sothoth as it appeared in *Conan of the Isles*, and translucent mountain-size dragon creatures out of Hogson's *The Night Land*, but those are trivia. All in all, the film is not a bad piece of humorous fantasy, one of the rare animated fantasies aimed at the adult market. We should criticize it, but encourage it, if we want more.



#### HISTORY OF THE PROPELLOR BEANIE: PART 6

Rocket research brought to  
light this astonishingly  
simple device:



Asbestos Beanie



Top View

standard  
pyrotechnical  
pinwheel

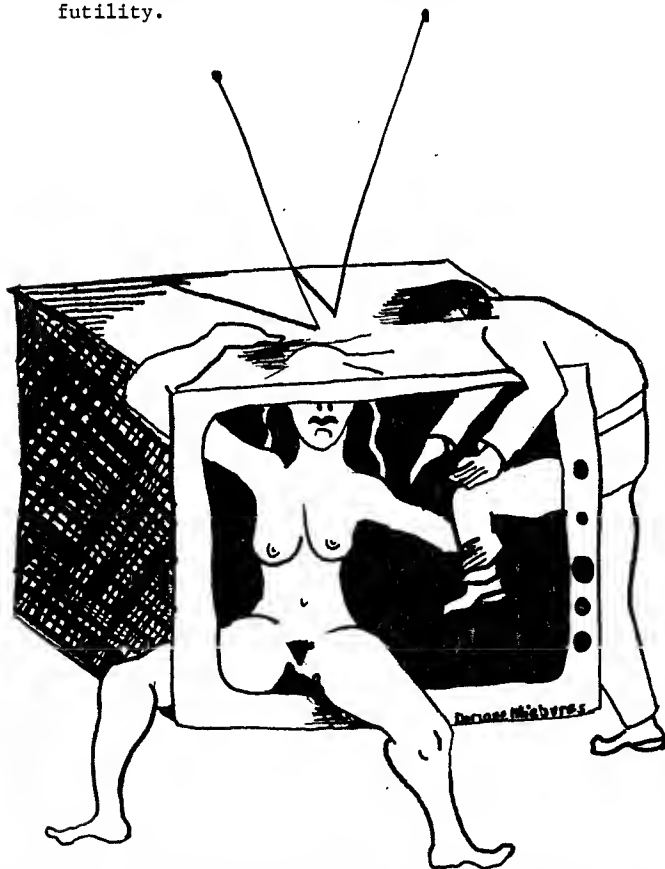
GR

# NETWORK: Maybe It Ain't Science Fiction, But It Deserves Comment For Its Sloppy Politics

By Janice Bogstad

Dick and Diane have listed *Network* along with two other movies that they consider as having only marginal association with science fiction as a genre. I don't necessarily agree with them, but a casual conversation with Dick prompted me to take a closer look at this particular movie.

Dick was willing to dismiss *Network* as an overdone satire on every sector of contemporary American society. This is where I disagree with him. The film satirized a very specific age group in a very systematic fashion. In its focus on television and the television audience, on the co-optation of Marxist and terrorist groups, and its portrayal of a big business magnate as a demonic figure, the movie deflected one's attention away from what is actually the source of all of our feelings of alienation and futility.



*Network* sets up the money-making machinations of a fictional TV network as a straw man. Through this straw man, the movie makes an attack on the now-familiar criminal, the apathetic youth of contemporary society. Consider the main character, a female news producer, who has an affair with her middle-aged predecessor. This ends with his attack on her inability to deal with other people, specifically him, in any other way than as part of a "soap-

opera" scenario. Consider the portrait of two factions of America's radical left, the young, (black) Communist woman allows herself to be co-opted by the television station. Her political platform has no effect on her young, apathetic television audience. The young, (black) radical terrorist shoots-it-up over a "contract in residuals." These two co-opted alternatives are represented as the radical left and as the youth of America. Finally consider the fact that the studio audiences for the television news spectacular represented in *Network* consisted mostly of young people who would shout, "I'm not going to take it any more," with just as much apathetic enthusiasm and just as little political awareness as they were depicted displaying towards all other aspects of their lives.

And what about the big business magnate who got our intrepid hero, the older news producer, fired and who attacked a "spectacular" (in the sense of spectacle-creating) news commentator because he interfered with "the international nation of capital investment"? Well okay, I wouldn't mind seeing more of that kind of analysis, but not represented as one man's attempts to use religious feelings, specifically the belief in "primal forces" to convince another that he must not make a public attack on the politics of big business.

I guess what I object to in the last analysis is the sense of futility conveyed by this and several other marginally science fiction films that I have seen in the past few months. Like *Twilight's Last Gleaming*, and *Three Days of the Condor*, *Network* conveys a sense of the ultimate futility of struggling with the destructive forces in advanced capitalist society.

When the newscaster, portrayed by Peter Finch, yells that the individual is dead, when the only outcome of collective anger is a bunch of window-shouting, and when the old and the young of this country are portrayed in the cliché-ish division of the "generation gap", that is, TV vs pre-TV generation, the viewer is left with the distinct impression that s/he has no alternative course of action. Perhaps *Network* diagnoses a problem in American society but puts the blame in the wrong place, and by doing so it subverts the possibility of a solution. It demeans the possibility of individual action and the true character of voluntary, constructive, collective action. Thus it negates the possibility of a change in our society in the minds of its audience. Everything is controlled by big business, this movie tells us, and you cannot hope to prevail against it. C'mon, we can do better than this, especially when it is so apparent, even in this film, that feelings of futility and pessimism on the part of the greater portion of America's population are the perfect conditions under which a dehumanizing socio-economic system which leads to the further consolidation and control of multi-national corporations, can flourish at ease.



## JANUS BOOK REVIEWS

# GOOD, BAD, INDIFFERENT DIANE MARTIN A Review of D. J. Lake's WALKERS ON THE SKY

My reactions to *Walkers on the Sky*, by David J. Lake (DAW Books, 1976) were mixed. Let's start with the indifferent.

The young hero, banished from his home town because of a misunderstanding, sets off to seek his fortune. He signs on as a crew member on a ship. Turns out the captain is a crook who sells him as a slave. He escapes and takes refuge in another country. He joins forces with these folks and helps them defend themselves against an invasion by his native country. In the process he wreaks personal revenge on the man who sold him into slavery. And everyone lives happily ever after.

Doesn't sound much like science fiction, does it? That's the problem. When the superficial SF trappings are removed, it's just your standard adventure story. Could have taken place anywhere, any time.

Now the bad aspect of this book isn't really bad. It's more like pitiful. The story is based in a typical male-oriented society. About what you'd expect in this kind of adventure story. Then the author throws in some feeble and obviously obligatory pro-feminist remarks. I really hate to fault the guy for trying—but his remarks are the kind that give feminism a bad name.

Now for the good part. In general, the language in this book is a delight. The narrative moves right along, and the dialog is peppy and humorous, if not always believable. It gives me hope that someday, if Lake ever gets his head screwed on tight, with regards to feminism, he could write an actual, grown-up novel, instead of an adolescent attempt at one. ☹

—This review was originally heard on The Madison Review of Books, WORT, FM.



# A REVIEW OF BLOOM'S ANATOMIES OF EGOISM: A STUDY OF WELLS' LATER NOVELS

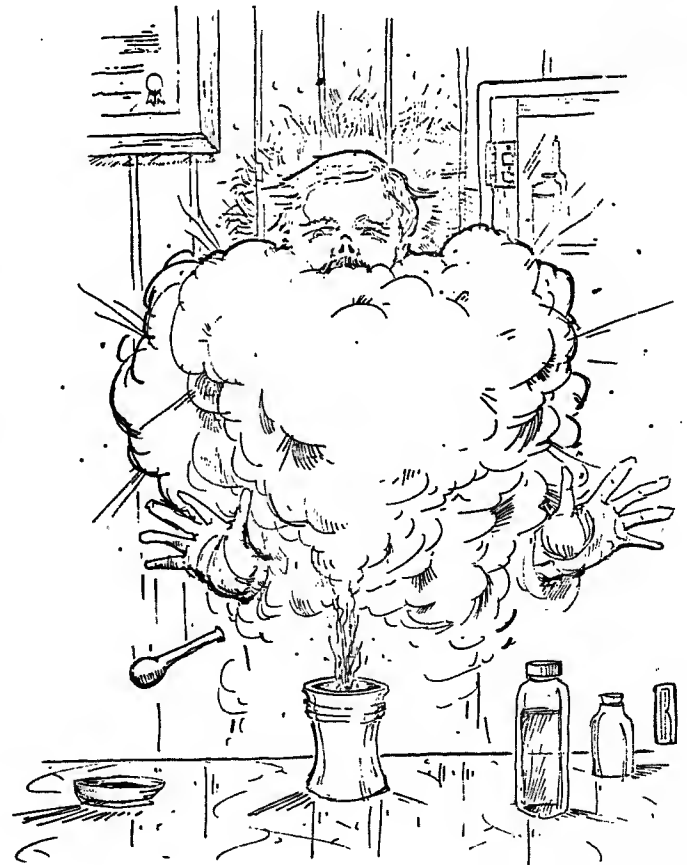
By Philip Kaveny

Why in the world would anyone write a book making a critical evaluation of three of H.G. Wells' late and rather obscure novels? Why in the world would anyone read and review such a book? I have good answers to both of those questions.

In the last two years I have been making a study of the life, writings, visions, and nightmares of H.G. Wells. I have found that the mind of H.G. Wells was both renaissance in scope and kaleidoscopic in diversity. In a literary career that spanned over half a century, from his first attempt at an unsuccessful version of the *Time Machine* in 1889 to the publication of his doctoral dissertation on the future of man in 1944, we have the most heroic of saga of all, the development and unfolding of a mind that was in tune with the most exciting and catastrophic period of human history. Bloom comes to the defense of Wells by contending that much of his work was unjustly consigned to the literary scrap heap as being either aesthetically displeasing or hackneyed and polemical. Bloom quotes the great arbitrator (I would say albatross) of literary excellence, Henry James, as saying that Wells belonged to the squeezed-orange school of literary realism which let life run rampant without reason through art, and most particularly through his novels. Bloom places James and Wells at opposite poles on the question of the relationship between life and art in the superb first chapter entitled "Life and Art." We see Henry James saying that art exists for itself and we can go no further and Wells feeling that art, and most particularly the novel, serves the purpose of articulating complex and interrelated ideas which could be expressed in no other form.

Wells consciously used the novel to articulate his philosophic position as he noted the tremendous political and economic contradictions that were present in late nineteenth century Capitalism. In *Things to Come* and *When the Sleeper Wakes* we see him carry these contradictions to their logical anti-humanistic and authoritarian conclusion. He felt the novel was the only medium that was available to articulate these contradictions to the rest of society. In his essay on the function of the novel, printed in 1914, he states that the novel must be something other than an upper class diversion. Wells creates a world of the future not as some mental amusement park, but as a means of reflecting and articulating the contradictions of the present, with the hope that the source of these contradictions can thereby be overturned. Bloom, through his careful reading of three of H.G. Wells' last novels, shows how Wells has learned some of the literary

forms of his critics in order to confront and ridicule the ghost of Henry James, who died in 1916 but whose spectre has held several generations of writers and critics impotent until the present. The book is an example of what a good teacher recently described as the function of good criticism. It causes us to take another look at H.G. Wells, to give him another hearing,



so to speak. And yet, for all of this Bloom's work is inadequate because it, in turn, consigns H.G. Wells' last and very important political writings to the wastebasket with a stroke of its pen. I intend to have a word with Mr. Bloom about this. ●

# A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS: Morris' NEWS FROM NOWHERE, As a sexist Utopia »»MARLEEN BARR««

Supposedly, William Morris' *News From Nowhere* illustrates how freedom emerges from a union between variety of life and equality of condition. However, only the men are truly free. Every male has equal access to products such as food, clothing—and women. The following sentence serves as a good example of the novel's attitude toward females: "Tis a good job there are of many of them [women] that every Jack can have his Jill; else I fear that we should get fighting for them." Women are little more than objects in this "Utopian" society. Strong adherances to stereotypical sexual conceptions cause Morris' female characters to assume stagnant, secondary roles.

A conversation between Dick and The Guest epitomizes the novel's sexist feminine depiction:

'What a beautiful creature,' said I to Dick as we entered.

'What Old Greylocks?' [Greylocks is a horse] said he with a sly grin.

'No, no' said I, 'Goldyllocks—the lady.'

This comparison is not at all humorous; it is debasing to place women and horses in the same category. Unfortunately, the men are oblivious to subtle differentiation!

Other references to women's physical appearances contain another sort of sexism. Although aged men are represented by Old Hammond and the old grumbler, all of the females are beautiful and young. This is seen in the following examples: "On that occasion the custom is for the prettiest girls to sing some of the old revolutionary songs....The pretty waitress came in smiling....In came a very beautiful young woman." The society's most intricate aspects are explained in great detail; descriptions of half of the population's aged portion are never mentioned in the text.

This situation implies that only young, attractive women are worthwhile. The guest exhibits this attitude toward Clara, his attractive new acquaintance: He "thought it bad manners to stare at Clara all the time though she was quite worth it." Clara would be ignored if she were talented, intelligent and ugly. Such behavior toward women falsifies one of Old Hammond's statements about his society. His belief that "the idea of women being the property of men has vanished with private property" is not really practiced. Although the guest does not "own" Clara in the exact sense of the word, he appraises her as if she were a piece of the property.

Even though they are free to pursue diversified activities, all the women adhere to the duties associated with the feminine role. These females are obviously trying to receive positive reinforcement since it is stressed that they are "respected as a child bearer and rearer of children, desired as a

woman and loved as a companion." In other words, they are not encouraged to develop their individual personalities. As Carolyn Heilbrun states, "women have been programmed to foster growth as long as it is not their own, to use all that they have, as long as they use it for others."<sup>1</sup> No wonder Dick and the guest place women and horses in the same category. Both are seen as beasts of burden—horses carry men while women carry men's children.



In the Platonic City -- wisdom for the rulers...  
temperance for all classes... and justice the  
cause and condition of both.

Women derive their essences from relationships with men and children throughout the novel. This is obviously caused by the idea that "women do what they can do best and what they like best, and the men are neither jealous of it or injured by it." The society conditions women to derive pride and enjoyment from providing others with services and comforts. After all, the novel portrays females acting solely as mothers, waitresses and bed partners. The men have no reason to feel jealous or injured. Again, Carolyn

Heilbrun's words illuminate the situation: "Women have deeply incorporated the conviction that their personal effectiveness must lead to abandonment and isolation; that their destiny is to serve others. The perils for women on the road to self-authenticity are reinforced by society's judgements and by their own profoundest fears."<sup>2</sup> Morris' women have a great deal in common with some of their present day American female counterparts.

Thus, *News From Nowhere* does not successfully embody the principle that a union between variety of life and equality of condition will yield true freedom. A society which denies variation and equal status to one half of its population is definitely not free. Or, in Heilbrun's opinion, "authenticity and

subordination are incompatible and humanity without authenticity is a contradiction in terms."<sup>3</sup> A society which treats its female citizens as subordinate creatures is not humane. There is no such thing as a sexist Utopia! ■

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Carolyn G. Heilbrun, rev. of *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, by Jean Baker Miller, *The New York Times Book Review*, 14 Nov 1976, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Heilbrun, p. 4.

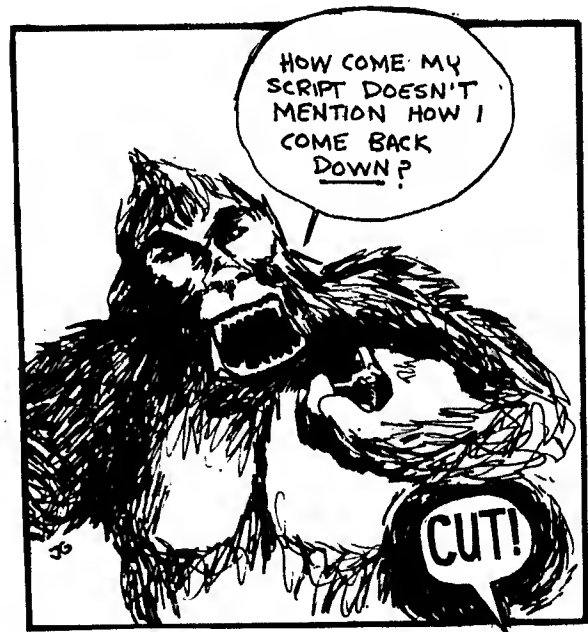
<sup>3</sup>Heilbrun, p. 62.

## KING KONG: TWO BI-MEDIA SPIN-OFFS

Greg G. H. Rihn

*King Kong* (by Delos W. Lovelace) as a novel adapted from a screen play is a light, fast, easy read. It is very faithful to the story of the original movie, and has the advantage that it fills in some details you might have missed in the movie, such as why film director Denham happened to be packing "narcotic grenades" when he ran across Kong. Not a profound story, the idea of the adventure story, pure and simple, is central. All the men are bold and courageous, the woman is pure and kind, and there are no bad guys at all. The central theme is action. In this respect, the film version comes off better since the trek across Skull Island to rescue Ann Darrow and Kong's fights with dinosaurs and aeroplanes that comprise most of the film come across better on the screen. A fun book for those who haven't seen the original movie, and a nostalgic treat for those who have.

*The Creation of Dino De Laurentis' King Kong* is another fast, easy read, mainly because there is nothing much of interest in it. The book is an attempt to cash in on the success of other how-they-did-it media books like *The Making of Kubrick's 2001* or *The Making of Star Trek*. What author Bruce Bahrenburg forgot was that with those books people were demanding to know how the technical wizardry of *2001* was accomplished or how Spock was born in Roddenberry's imagination. *TCODDL's King Kong* was available on the popcorn stand the day DDL's *King Kong* opened, before anyone knew if there was anything to be interested in. As far as the book is concerned, there is not. It reads like it was written by the studio PR man—Pocket Books—Simon and Schuster, by the way is a Gulf-Western Corporation—and so is Paramount, which released *King Kong*. The book deals as much with the creation of Jessica Lange as a film actress as it



#2

does Kong as a mechanical marvel—more so. All the technical goodies that made *2001* or *Star Trek* such delights to read about are left out in favor of poorly recounted anecdotes about the stars' reaction to the size of their dressing rooms and a lengthy description of De Laurentis' crowd control problems in New York—of small interest unless you belong to the local riot squad. Oh, yes—your buck-seventy-five also gets you fifty, count 'em fifty, dull and uninformative photographs of various stages of the production. A book best left to those who are so inutterably movie-mad that the genuine "King Kong" bookmark they may find between the pages will send them into paroxysms of collectable glee. I was amused—but not impressed. ■

—This review was originally heard on The Madison Review of Books, *WORT*, FM.

# Irresistable Schlog Meets Immovable Critic ... Thomas J. Murn

Bridge of Ashes & Doorways in the Sand by Roger Zelazny



Roger Zelazny's two latest novels, *Doorways in the Sand* (Harper & Row, 1976) and *Bridge of Ashes* (Signet, 1976) are definitely, deliberately hardcore SF—and they're also spell-binding in the extreme, the hate-to-put-it-down-till-yr-finished kinda gems. In spite of Zelazny's efforts to put something more into the hardcore SF artform than either god or Hugo Gernsback intended, both of these books crutch along on concepts spawned long ago—telepathy, runofthemill cute & evil types of aliens, crystalline lifeforms even. In *Bridge of Ashes*, an eco-terrorism group called Children of the Earth spouts ideologically inadequate platitudes, more identifiable with Sierra Club publications in the 1960's than any crazed rebel eco-maniac group of the future. In *Doorways in the Sand*, the hero's fast-paced life and penchant for cool humor in the face of adversity remind me of old *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* paperbacks—period pieces and tedious, no matter how dear to my heart. Both Zelazny novels seem to demand the label "science fiction," with the accent on adventure, no less. It was almost enough to make this stalwart critic wonder if *Gravity's Rainbow* was written in a proverbial vacuum.

So how come I enjoyed Zelazny's two books so much?

*Doorways in the Sand*, the earlier novel, relies on inter-galactic intrigue, as a stone lent to Earth as part of a cultural exchange program becomes lost—misplaced, actually. Alien machines and telepathic animals dance before the eyes of the beleaguered perpetual college student whose roommate inadvertently lifted the alien artifact from the laboratory of the suspicious professor. There are lotsa twists in the plot, though Zelazny's appetite for adventure is somewhat larger than mine.

The key to the success of the book is in Zelazny's constantly improving craftsmanship. While the plot never slows down enough for the reader to catch per breath, at appropriate moments suitable doses of speculation are interjected as to humanity's real purpose in the scheme of things, or whatever. There's even some suitable symbolic dynamics bubbling over low heat, in the background.

The later book, *Bridge of Ashes*, continues the dependence of Zelazny on what might be called SF conventions, but it's a newer brew of the older ideas. The action in the novel revolves around a super-telepath who gets accessibility to a collective human mind made up of Da Vinci, Rousseau, Archimedes, etc. This super-telepath comes along just in time for the human race, since as it turns out human evolu-

tion has been programmed by Meanies from yonder Alpha Proxima, for the selfish and evil purpose of turning Earth's atmosphere into a hydrocarbonated, biphenylized, sulphur-oxides-impregnated cesspool in which they can live. As human technology reaches the climax stage, the super-telepath (who incidentally is a departure from the mold of cool adventure types prominent in most of Zelazny's works) manages to get his mental shit together enough to show the smog-breathing Meanies a thing or two.

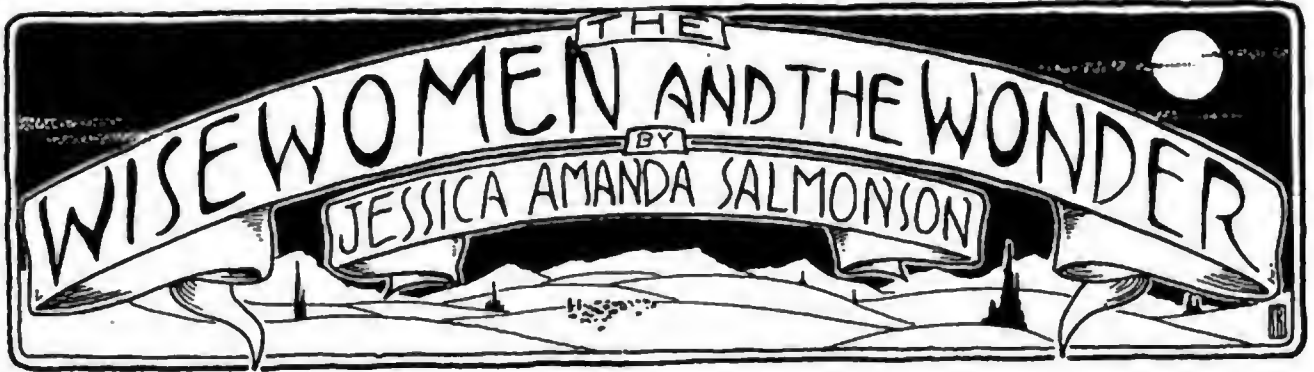
*Bridge of Ashes* demonstrates Zelazny's effort to expand his conceptional network, in the definite context of science fiction, to a more mature level. ...i.e., he starts to write in a spaced-out style every once in a while and falls off into passages such as

He-I-  
I... I am - I.  
I!  
I, am! I am! I am!

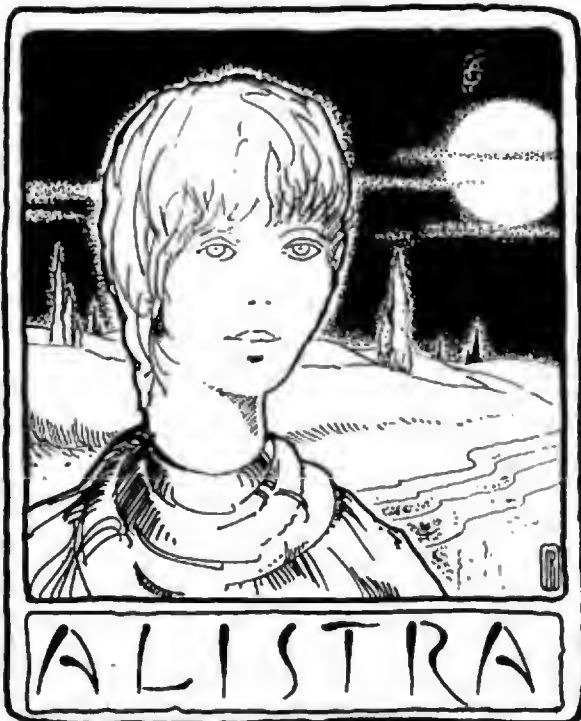
No, really, the reader's interest is never allowed to lag. There are no overly-long-winded passages, no diatribes, no parapsychology in tedious detail in either book. And the scope of both books is focused on the world as it is today, in all its struggling, self-seeking or soul-searching chaos. There is no world of escape, no parallel universe such as Amber to escape to. The aliens offer no absolute threat, no perfect solutions. Zelazny is careful to keep his historical viewer on wide-scan, and refer to antecedents in history, developments in sciences such as anthropology—as well as common sensical observations of humanity—to spice the philosophical speculations.

At this stage of his career, Roger Zelazny can speak for himself. His books were never wildly experimental (well, with the exception of *Creatures of Light and Darkness*), but neither do they stick to well-trodden paths to ensure commercial success. Even if Zelazny's craftsmanship does not continue to improve (and indications suggest the opposite), his works will undoubtedly continue to offer a keen perception of the human condition (leaning slightly towards late 20th Century white male American), a well-developed wit, masterful prose control, and always a few choice statements..for kickers...

...all that does matter is to build the image and enjoy it... (*Bridge of Ashes*, p. 35)



Jessica Amanda Salmonson asked that this story be removed from the electronic version. --Jeanne Gomoll







# MAKE BELIEVE

Mary Jane Trani

one night  
I sat and watched you read  
and I became enthralled seeing how your eyes  
swept  
the pages  
of Dune

Like wind,  
they whipped  
and cut through  
the pages of make-believe  
until  
the erosion  
ripped  
to your soul  
and left you  
as dry and arid  
as a desert sea

No man-made suit of armor  
could maintain  
the nourishment lost

as spirit  
evaporated  
into a vastness  
of aloneness

On clear days,  
when I can see your eyes  
again,  
I know the cost  
you have paid  
for belief  
in make believe.

(It was our only reality for awhile.)  
and I wonder if  
I look  
as empty as you  
when the sky is blue  
and the wind  
blows gently. ■

# Has

"Anybody seen F-621? Isn't this his post? I was told he would be here at 0900 hours. He is to accompany me to the Commander's cubicle." O-326 was one of the more beautiful women in Gillan. She was also the Commander's aide. O-326 had been promoted from an area supervisor to her present position ten months ago. The reason for her promotion was the same as any promotion on Gillan—she obeyed the rules and never asked questions which should not be asked, and because N-1 wanted her as his aide. As she spoke, her long black hair swayed across her shoulders and her steel grey eyes pierced the foreman at Supplementary Warehouse Three. "I asked where F-621 is. Don't you know how to answer when you're spoken to?" She was growing impatient with the inattentiveness of the android.

"I am sorry. I do not know where F-621 is. He should have been here at 0900 hours. It is now 0930 hours. However, since F-621 is a Supervisor and I am only a foreman, it is not my duty to always know where he is. If that is all, O-326, I shall return to my work."

Damned mechanical idiots, she thought. "That's all." O-326 did not know whether she should report to the Commander or wait at the warehouse for F-621. She decided to wait.

The planet Barrius is located in the Seventh Solar System of the Aranian Galaxy. The only city on the planet is Gillan. It has a surface area of two hundred and seven square miles. The city is artificially heated and lighted by large solar collecting panels located on top of the protective Arbimite dome. Arbimite is an opaque, glass-like substance with a strength superior to steel, which was developed especially to cover Gillan. The dome towers two miles above the city's center and then slopes down, becoming the walls for the outer edges of the metropolis. Gillan has been self-supporting for one hundred years—it was one hundred years and a few days since the dome had been sealed, forcing all which was out of the city out and all which was in the city to remain.

"Good morning, F-621, this is your Tele-Wake. It is 0700 hours. Time to prepare for work."

"Damn machines," thought F-621. "You can't live with them and you can't live without them. I want to sleep some more. Wake me at 0730."

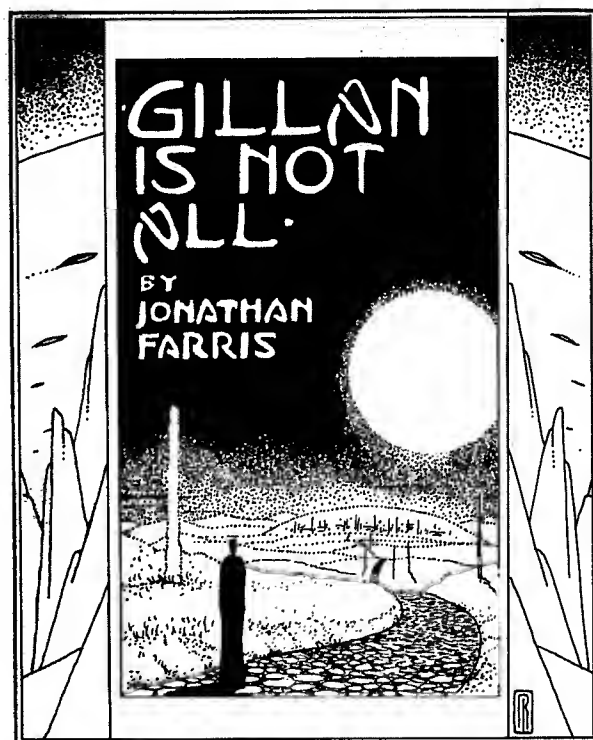
He drifted into his dreamworld again.

Itharia is mine. The cool breeze. Comfort. Contentment. Return is always welcome.

In the fields. Multicolored flowers. Reds, greens, blues, yellows—reflections of the sun's arms. A view. More than a postcard picture. The mountains. Blue-grey peaks farther away than I could ever imagine—closer than I could ever dream.

Walking. The forest gives me a dwarflike appearance. I feel as though I am trespassing on its territory. Itharia is mine. No people. Loneliness. Not really. I can control. But what?

Everything moves around me. Flowers growing. Birds flying. Flowers dying. The brooks flow—different directions—they all go to the same place.



The sky. Shades of blue. Cotton balls floating. Many shapes. I could dream of dragons. No, not a dream. Dragons. No, not in Itharia. Everything is of one mind. Whose mind?

A noise.... Not in Itharia.

A voice.... Not in Itharia.

"Good morning, F-621. This is your Tele-Wake. It is 0730 hours. Time to prepare for work."

He thought about the dream. It had been recurring for as many years as he could remember, but more recently since he had become a Supervisor, and always on the nights before he was to give a lecture at a Training Center. There was a gnawing feeling deep was the conflict. He was sure that he should tell them about Itharia, for he felt they were the key; but he knew the Leaders would not look kindly on a Supervisor who spoke of anything other than Gillan and Gillanian ways. Lately, though the dream had become more vivid, yet he did not totally understand it. "Is there something more to it that I don't understand? I wish I knew why I have this dream so often and why I enjoy it so much. It doesn't make sense—but I guess that is a natural because there isn't any such place as Itharia in Gillan. Gillan is a city of Arbimite. Very strong and very dull Arbimite. It is a city where people stand in transporters, push a button and materialize at the Supplementary Warehouses, Control Centers, or their own particular area of work. A city where people do only the things which they are trained to do—not what they want to do—although most of the inhabitants believe their jobs are what they want. A city where everyone lives in cubicles; the only difference between them being the number of sleeping areas in each. Gillan is a city where names are unknown to most and numbers are the way in which people are identified. A city in which sunlight is unknown and where man-made color-corrected lights are turned on in the mornings and turned off at night. Gillan is a man-made horror, almost totally mechanized, in which people exist—only exist—and where people ceased to live one hundred years ago." F-621 knew all this to be true, but as for how he knew, that was a mystery. "I'd like to think about this some more. I wonder if the automatized foreman will miss me if I don't go to the Warehouse today?"

The Commander, N-1 was sitting in his chair at Gillan Control Central. It was believed by all Gillanians, although it had long ceased to be discussed, that he had been chosen Commander one hundred years ago when the dome had been sealed. However, no one knew who chose him, even though he must have been the obvious choice. He designed Gillan and was the chief engineer during its construction. Since the completion day, he had made certain that everyone did their jobs in order to maintain life and happiness. In Gillan everyone must be content. There could be no other way.

Today was different for N-1. He had heard through his special sources that the Supervisor F-621 had been telling stories of another place to some of the people in the city. What disturbed N-1 was the fact that F-621 had been talking to many of the children at the Training Centers. Because of his position as a Supervisor, he had ample opportunity to see many children, since one aspect of his job was to lecture at the Centers about the importance of working to keep Gillan a thriving city. N-1 worried that if this Supervisor put any of the old ideas into the heads of the children that there could be discontentment which would create problems in the future—maybe the near future. N-1 would tolerate no rebellion. It had never been tolerated in the past and he was making certain there would be none in the future. He spun around in his chair. He would be glad when O-326 brought F-621 to him.

As O-326 sat in the waiting room at Supplementary Warehouse Three, she watched the efficiency of the workers with appreciative eyes. Plastic food containers moved on conveyor from one level to the next. Each worker moved only as far as was necessary to complete his job. "A conservation of energy which produces with complete efficiency," thought O-326 aloud with only the neighboring chairs to hear. "This is the way all things should run. Maximum input producing minimum output. If it were not for people such as F-621 who questioned the ways and tried to disrupt the harmony, this city would be as perfect as we were taught it was."

O-326 was a prime example of what a good Gillanian should be. She had been born in the city and trained at the Training Centers. Her parents, just as all people who were not born in Gillan, were given ten hours each in a tegrif booth where remembrances of everything other than Gillan and Gillanian ways were erased, brought her up as a normal Gillanian child. She had shown herself to be very astute at the Training Center, and was placed as an Area Supervisor after completion of the required courses. As an Area Supervisor, she showed herself to be above average at following directions of Section Supervisors, and so was placed on a promotion list after only several years at her first job. When N-1 examined the promotion list, he decided that she would be an able aide, and for the past ten months she had shown herself to be just that.

After sitting for another twenty minutes, O-326 decided to return to Gillan Control Center to report F-621's absence from work to the Commander. He would not be pleased, and O-326 knew it.

A-137 was sixteen years old. In another four months he would be done with his training. His degree would be in personnel supervision. Because of his high grades at the Training Center, he would be a Supervisor at one of the Supplementary Warehouses. Being a Supervisor was a job of high esteem in Gillan. At least that is what his trainers had told him.

A-137 also believed in life outside the dome, but he could not tell anyone of this fact for fear of be-

ing classified an "Unfit." In his earlier years at the Training Center he was taught, just as everyone was taught, that it would be impossible to live outside the dome. How could anyone or anything live without purified air, purified water, purified light, and purified food? Everything on Gillan was purified, including the people. That was what the learned had said. If it has not been purified by the proper Gillan methods, then it is not pure—and if it is not pure, you cannot live with it. That is part of what A-137 had learned at the Training Center, and he was expected to believe it.

When he was very young, his parents spoke about a place where wind blew, flowers grew, and people had to grow their own food out of the ground. They said that this place was outside the dome, but that no one could go there. They did not tell him how they knew but they told him that he could never speak to anyone about the place.

Then when he was eight years old, his parents brought a decrepit old woman to their cubicle to talk with him. He remembered that she had a very strange name, not like his or any which he had ever heard—Mary—yes, that was her name. Mary. His parents never told him why they brought Mary to talk with him, but he never forgot the words which she spoke.

"You, A-137, will be the beginning of life as it was meant to be. You will be a leader, a Supervisor, but in a greater way than anyone has ever known. You will give the people of Gillan, the trapped people of Gillan, a new way—a new life. The new life will be like a wonderful dream. Remember that some people will want to help you, but more importantly, some people will want to hurt you, stop you, and make a fool of you. So move cautiously—but always move. As you grow and learn, and I mean learning other than the Training Centers, you will begin to understand."

At that time, A-137 did not know why his parents had brought this strange woman to talk to him, but for an unaccountable reason, he knew that he should not ask. He was sure that his parents had had a good reason, so he kept Mary's words in his mind and learned as much as possible in as many ways as possible without being overly obvious to the Trainers.

Several months after Mary had spoken with him, his parents were taken to a tegrif booth for a day. After that they never mentioned Mary and were unable to answer any of A-137's questions about wind or flowers. He made sure not to ask them again after that.

On the sixth day of every week the workers were required to work, but the children did not have training classes. A-137 wanted to talk to the man who had given the speech in the training center the past week and whom he had talked to privately for a short while after that speech. This man, F-621, lived in cubicle area 2372, cubicle 621. Even though he thought F-621 would be at work, A-137 decided he would go to his cubicle, because he had nothing else he wanted to do on his day off. He hoped that the man would tell him about "Itharia." It was mentioned after his speech, but only as a word, and A-137 did not like to be left with a word without a meaning. He hoped that F-621 would trust him enough to explain the word and the meaning behind the word, because A-137 wanted to learn, and that was his opinion of real learning.

"What do you mean he was not at his post? If he was not at his post then where is he? I assume you tried looking at his cubicle? N-1 was exceptionally annoyed at the moment. "You did look at his cubicle, didn't you?"

"Well...I...didn't think to try there. You see



## ITHARIA

...I was watching the workers at the..."

"What do you mean you didn't think to try there? Your job is not to watch things, your job is to do as you are told. Go. Take a security android with you and go to his cubicle. And this time bring him back."

"Enter. Oh, A-137, I am pleased that you came to visit with me. I could tell by all of the questions which you asked me that you were more than an average trainee. I am sorry I didn't answer any of your inquiries at the Training Center after my speech, but it isn't advisable for me to be seen talking to children in private. The Commander and his companions do not breathe freely when people like myself put strange ideas in the heads of young trainees."

"I understand, sir, and that is why I have come here to see you. I was hoping we could talk, or more specifically, that I could listen to you speak. I am especially interested in this Itharia which you so briefly mentioned. Will you tell me more?"

"Of course, of course. It is rewarding to me to know that someone, especially one of the young trainees, is willing to be as open-minded as you. I dream that someday, in the near future, people like yourself will change Gillan. I dream that you, and others who can believe as I think you do, will make Gillan and her people something other than a self-supporting achromatic shell of a city, a place where people do more than make and distribute food so they can exist to make and distribute more food. Yes, I dream that you will make this type of Itharia, or even escape to a real Itharia where people, by their own will, can choose their own destinies."

"Forgive me, A-137, as usual I was carried away by my incessant desire to be in Itharia. However, I am old and set in my ways. I have been conditioned by Gillan and her leaders, ever though the conditioning wasn't as complete as the Commander might like."

But you—if you listen and learn—you are young enough to break away, to a better life. Now listen carefully, for you cannot stay very long.

"Itharia is a dream, but I feel it is also more than a dream. It is a dream which has returned many times, and most often the nights before I am scheduled to speak at a Training Center the next day. Yes, Itharia is a dream which I believe to exist or at least could exist. It is a dream which is closer to us than we might imagine. I don't know where, but I do know that it is near."

"Itharia is a place of flowers and colors. It is a place of the brightest blues and reds and greens and more, yes, more colors than you will ever read about in textbooks." A-137 looked down at his dull grey uniform for only a second and then returned his gaze toward this amazing old man. "Itharia is also a place of forests and oceans. Seas so wide that our powerful ionoscopes couldn't see the other side. And in the oceans are fish and creatures of every kind. Itharia is a place of night and day, where there is sunlight and where there is rain. A place where man does not control the weather. Itharia is a place where you can feel a cool breeze touch your face and running brooks laugh their way over your feet." As F-621 spoke, the boy saw a sadness in his eyes. He had the look of a man who could never really know his own dream as anything other than a dream. A-137 remained silent, waiting for F-621 to continue. "The only thing which Itharia does not have is the people who were meant to live there." F-621 took a deep breath. "Now go, A-137, and think about what I have said. Watch out for those who do not believe, for they will hurt you. I will never make it to Itharia, but you—you will—if you believe. Good-bye, son."

As O-326 and the android approached cubicle area 2372, she saw a boy running toward the outer edge of the city. She did not pay attention to the boy's illegal running, however, because she had other orders. In less than another minute, she pushed the entrance button to cubicle 621.

"Enter. Yes? May I help you?"

"You are F-621?"

"Yes."

"I am O-326, an aide for the Commander. By his order you are to accompany me to Gillan Control Central. If you do not wish to come with me, there is an android guard outside the door who will assist you."

"I will go with you, O-326, I have nothing to hide and no reason not to go. And you may send your android back to guard someone who needs guarding; I will not run away." As they walked out the door, the android reached for the button to close cubicle 621.

The android pushed the button and O-326 led F-621 into the cubicle of the commander at Gillan Control Central.

"I have brought F-621, as you ordered, Commander. Do you wish for me to remain during the inquiry?"

"Yes, the Board will want a witness to be sure the questioning session was legitimate. Be seated F-621, I have some things to ask you."

"We have had you monitored for the past few months and we feel that you are discontented with your life in Gillan. Is this true?"

"I could be happier." F-621's face grew slightly pale wondering if they knew about A-137.

"And have you also been illegally talking to children about rebellion after most of your speeches at the Training Centers?"

"I didn't know that telling children about fields of colorful flowers was considered rebellion." The

color had returned to F-621's face, as he felt that N-1 did not know about the boy, since he mentioned the Training Centers.

"Then you admit that you spoke to many children after your speeches?"

"Yes."

"And did you also know that rebellion of this kind is punishable by death in the ferochamber?"

"I assumed that Gillan had a rule of that kind."

"You did not seem very upset for a man who has just admitted that he thought he should die for his rebellion."

"I didn't say that I thought I should die, Commander. I said that I know I'll probably die for doing and saying something which I believed to be right."

"But the fact that you will probably die does not bother you?"

"I may die, N-1, but my dream will live. That which I believed to be, will be. How can I be sad about that?"

"What are you talking about? What dream? Death doesn't bother you? You need psychotherapy and the tegrof booth. Would you forget all of this foolishness if we allowed you to take psychotherapy, F-621?"

"I cannot forget that which I believe in and that which I know to be right."

"You are an idiot. Does your life mean nothing to you?"

"My life means less than my dream, Commander. No matter what you do, I shall always have my dream."

"Guards, take this old fool away. Bring him to the ferochamber. His sentence will be carried out tomorrow morning at 0700 hours."

N-1 paced to his chair, sat down, and then looked toward O-326. "Sanity has left his mind. I have never seen a case as hopeless as this during my existence. Not caring about his own death, that is unheard of."

O-326 looked at N-1 with confused eyes. She was too well-trained as a Gillanian to ever understand the implications of F-621's dream or why the Commander was so upset. "What do you think his dream was, N-1?"

"There are no dreams in Gillan, O-326, there is only reality. That man is an Unfit. He did not know that he was living in a perfect place. He did not understand that Gillan is the only way. There are many happy people in Gillan, and F-621 will not be missed at all."

F-621 stood at the window of the Ferochamber. 0630 hours. He had thirty minutes left to live, yet for some reason that fact did not disturb him. He stared into the empty streets. There were no sights to be seen and sounds to be heard. He turned and sat down to wait.

As the Fero-rays began to take their lethal effect, F-621 heard the sound of children's voices in the distance. He also heard something else—a sound like thousands of fists beating on a wall.



Ray guns and rockets  
things that come from space  
Atom bombs and ESP  
the ancient Martian race  
All in my SF magazines.

Time machines and robots  
and intergalactic empires  
Space ships and aliens  
The End of Earth by Hydrogen fires  
All in my SF magazines.

John Carter of Mars and Northwest Smith  
The Man of Bronze and Captain Future  
And all the star flung breed of Heros  
Rescuing ladies truth and virtue  
All in my SF magazines  
And private fantasies.



# THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SWEDEN

BY RICHARD S. RUSSELL

*[When looking at Richard's story in its original form, we were faced with several mechanical problems. It was too long for one issue of Janus, but, since too much time elapses between the publication of each issue for us to serialize anything, it had to be printed in one issue if at all. Therefore, it had to be shorter. In addition, the original story relied too heavily on third-person narrative, with one excessively long section making up the body of the story. To cut out all the explanations which made up this part would have drastically marred the story. Yet to alternate the narrative with dialogue, or with flashbacks, a technique used elsewhere in the story, would have added to the length. An unusual solution was clearly called for. Devoted as I am to the printed word, I suggested a few pages of parallel dialog and description à la Delaney. Richard tried this, but at the same time he consulted with Jeanne Gomoll, and they arrived at the solution that you see represented below. It is somewhat reminiscent of Gahan Wilson's *...*, which appeared in *Again, Dangerous Visions* but also combines this with Delaney's double-storyline technique. Let us know how effective you think this experiment is. —JAN BOGSTAD]*

## NILSSON (1)

Bjorn Nilsson was intelligent, quick-witted, and very good at his job—protecting His Royal Majesty Carl XVI Gustav, King of Sweden, of the Goths, and of the Wends, Emperor of Earth, from all of the considerable number of fanatics who had designs on his head.

So Nilsson was more than just slightly uneasy when Carl told him to remain behind at the autolift. His protests were to no avail, though, and he fidgeted as he watched the young ruler pick his way carefully through the rustling brown grass of late summer. Normally even Nilsson's athletic body was pressed to keep pace with the long-legged strides of his energetic young monarch, who exhausted two shifts of staff people during each of the 16-hour days he had been maintaining without stint for the last five years.

Once Nilsson had complained that security was impossible, because he could never get his people placed far enough ahead of Carl to keep a watchful eye out for trouble. Carl had smiled at the thought and replied, "Sorry, Bjorn, too much work to be able to slow down. Besides," he had laughed, "if you can't keep ahead of me, what chance would an assassin have?"

But now Carl, the indefatigable Carl, acted as if he had seven eternities at his disposal for this little diversion, though Nilsson knew the paperwork was piled as high as ever on the king's desk. Eyes narrowing in the fading light, Nilsson stood irritably grinding his right fist into his left palm for another half a minute before snapping at the pilot: "Binoculars!" Snatching the hastily proffered night glasses to his eyes, Nilsson forced himself to slow down as he scanned the area around the king. He saw nothing unusual. *But then*, he thought bitterly, *that tall grass could hide an army.*

Cursing silently to himself, he resolved to edge around and ahead of Carl as soon as it was dark enough that he wouldn't be noticed. *Maybe I can do it now*, he thought, *if he isn't looking.*

He swung the glasses back. And, just as he had last week found a sniper with his attention fixed on the king to the exclusion of all else, so did he now find Carl's entire concern focused on the old man leaning on his right arm for support. In two seconds, Nilsson was crouched over, running to circle the knoll ahead from the left.

## CARL (1)

For the dozenth time since they had met less than an hour earlier, Carl found himself wondering about the age of the Laran sociologist. Most of the other Larans he had seen looked fairly young. Yet he knew from one or another of his briefings that the youngest of the offworlders cleared for Earth duty was at least 60 Earth years old. *At that*, Carl mused, *they're only 60 in subjective time.* Considering the time dilation of near-light travel speeds, a pilot could have passed 200 years objective time while actually "living" only half of that. But for all their actual age, the Laran pilots, crew members, officials, and advisors—both men and women—were physically in their prime. Then how old must Carnovis be?

Searching for a scale of comparison, Carl tried to recall the most aged Laran he had met before Carnovis. He frowned. Annabis, the fleet commander? Notolis, the physics liaison woman? Both appeared to be gracefully entering middle age. No one, then? Not a single elderly Laran in the five years since...

Wait a minute! Netexis, of course! Tellurin Netexis, the genial ambassador who was the first Laran Carl had ever met. He was so familiar a figure around the palace that Carl found it difficult to remember that he was not Swedish by birth. Indeed,

Netexis had adapted well to Sweden. Five years ago he was tall and lean, like every other Laran Carl had encountered. He was still as tall, but good Swedish cooking appealed to him even more than to his companions; he had soon developed a noticeable paunch. His belly, probably more even than his snow-white hair and weathered face, created the impression of a retired farmer indulging a frustrated lifetime longing for indolence. Yet for all his good humor and apparent lassitude, the ambassador's amiable outward appearance concealed a brilliant and canny mind. Netexis was responsible not only for most of Carl's knowledge of things extra-terrestrial but also for several valuable bits of common-sense advice at critical times in the last half-decade. Carl remembered their first meeting as if it had been yesterday....

### NETEXIS

Tellurin Netexis, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary from the Kantol of Lara to the planet Earth, was not often given to snap impressions. It was his profession to reserve judgment until all the facts were in. *And, he reminded himself, previous experience at judging character is valueless here. This race is different entirely; physical cues are different; nothing is certain.* Yet he couldn't help feeling an immediate liking for the crown prince, who was politely escorting him to the suite in the palace reserved for visiting royalty. *It must be his physique, Netexis assessed, tall and spare like a Laran, not bulgy and soft like most Earthmen.* Not, for example, like the young man's grandfather, King Gustav VI, who had just introduced them moments earlier before retiring to conserve his failing health.

"I don't believe Grandfather mentioned what nation you represent, ambassador," Carl remarked as they ascended the curving palace staircase.

"That is one thing I must explain," Netexis replied. "I am equipped to explain in my luggage, which has been sent to the room assigned. I can tell you now that you have no acquaintance with my, ah, 'country'."

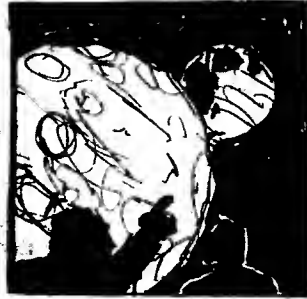
Carl looked at Netexis curiously but said no more. Again, that was to his credit, Netexis thought. Quickly he did a mental review of the prince's file. Groomed for the throne since his father had died in an airplane crash, Carl showed remarkable mental aptitude. Moreover, he was a fierce soccer player and had rowed on the varsity crew at the University of Uppsala. The latter distinction was in no way attributable to his royal heritage; it was an honor to be earned, and thus it remained Carl's most prized accomplishment. It was a reflection on the nature of a constitutional monarchy that the crown prince had only this athletic achievement as a serious contender for the high point in his life. In Sweden, there was little of significance for even a king to do; the crown prince was expected to show up dutifully for photographs at state occasions, generally keep his nose clean, and otherwise stay out of the way. After graduation and a hitch in the Royal Navy, Carl had languished under the routine of court life. And, though he was heir to the throne, his grandfather had shown signs of living forever. Gustav would be 100 in 1982. It looked as if Carl would be forced to continue in this lackluster role of crown prince indefinitely. *Ambitious, capable, and restless, Netexis appraised. 300 years ago, he would have been a dynamic ruler. Now he is just so much wasted potential.*

*Or he would have been,* Netexis amended, *until tonight.*

Once inside his suite, Netexis placed two chairs against one wall and motioned Carl to one of them

while he rummaged in his suitcase. After dimming the lights, he seated himself next to the prince. He held up an object about the same size and shape as a black plastic cigaret case. Four spots glowed faintly on one of the large faces of the object: red, orange, yellow, and lime green.

"I represent the Kantol of Lara, your highness, a nation faraway of which I am sure you have never heard. But I believe this will help you understand." So saying, Netexis pressed gently on the glowing red spot.



Carl could not suppress a gasp of amazement. From the pictures taken by the astronauts, he knew he was looking at the Earth and the Moon, but in three dimensions and color, with a clarity and from a vantage point that no Earth dweller had ever attained. No other illustration could have established the otherworldliness of the ambassa-

dor more quickly or convincingly.

Realizing from Carl's quick glance that he had arrived at the correct implication of the scene, Netexis said softly, "Yes, your highness, it is true. I am not of your world. The Kantol of Lara is on a planet of a far distant star. Please do not fear me. I am here to help you, not to harm you. Please, let me explain further. This device, called a cokat, will provide a visual accompaniment." Netexis stroked the orange spot.

"That is my own home world, Lara. Notice that there is only one fairly large body of water on the entire planet. This is the cradle of life on Lara. We call it Etola. In your language, that would be 'Ocean' simply. We have no special name for it, like 'Atlantic' or 'Pacific', because it is the only ocean we know; there



is no reason to distinguish it from any other, any more than you need two different terms for the sky.

"This is one of our old longboats. It is similar rather to those of your Viking ancestors, I have learned. These boats enabled us to cross Etola effectively quite, because, as you see, it is a narrow somewhat body of water from east to west, even



though it runs half the length of Lara from north to south. Because all almost of our early commerce was carried on by boat, and because intelligent life never evolved elsewhere on Lara, our civilization developed uniformly along the entire shoreline. We have a common language and common customs. We are, in truth, a single society, without any distinctive differences or nationalities.



"Here you see the twin stars around which Lara revolves. Every 17 of your years we pass close unusually...excuse me, I mean unusually close...to the small white star. This near passage, called P'nyolo, is a time of intense heat, accompanied by severe drought, lower production of food, and a noticeable shrinkage of Etola.



"P'nyolo is always a time of great suffering. The word itself is used in our language to mean 'grief'. But, because of it and natural selection, we have become an especially durable people. We regularly live to the age of 500 of your years.

"Due to the periodic shortages of food and water, our race has had very strict customs of population control from time beyond history. For example, I am a male. My, ah, wife...that is not the precise relationship, but it is the closest your language will allow...my wife and I have two offspring, a male for myself and a female for her. It was necessary for me to wait until my father's death to permit my son's birth. In effect, my son is taking my father's place. Thus there is always enough food and water."

"You said you had a son for yourself and a daughter for your wife," Carl interjected. "Excuse me if this is a personal question, but don't you live together as a family unit?"

"We do, but there is a special relationship between parent and child of the same sex. You see, we have the ability, within certain limits, to determine not only the sex of a child but also intelligence, physical features, and special abilities. The male parent determines the characteristics of the male offspring, and the female parent does likewise for the female child. This is similar to the manner in which your race, I am told, selects names for children."

"It would seem to me you'd have some problems if one parent felt differently than the other about what their children should look like, or how intelligent they should be. And what if, say, the wife wanted a large family and the husband didn't?"

In spite of his preparation for discussions of this type, Netexis was mildly scandalized. "No, no! There is no question! There are no large families. Only two children, one male, one female. And there is no question either about one parent intruding upon the prerogatives of the other when selecting characteristics for the child. The taboo on these matters is very strong. It is similar to your, ah, having sexual relations with your mother. I should warn you to avoid the subject with other Larans."

"What other Larans?"

"In time there will be more of us. For now, there is only me. And I must continue with my lesson here." Netexis was experiencing for the first time a situation he was to encounter often thereafter—the insatiable curiosity of *homo sapiens*.

*Not a patient race*, he reflected. *Not patient at all!*

"To resume with P'nyolo. To understand our culture, you must understand P'nyolo. It has caused us to be very cautious and deliberate, especially since

births occur in the same 17-year cycle as P'nyolo. Obviously, one waits until P'nyolo has passed before bringing a child into the world. And if the aftermath of P'nyolo is especially harsh, it is customary to let a whole cycle, or even two or three P'nyolet, pass without giving birth. Each Laran, you see, will have only one child, ever. So our children are our most important and revered personal concerns. We care for them completely and never would jeopardize them through carelessness or ignorance. We place a very high value on intelligent life, since it is a limited commodity on Lara.

"This has led to an attitude which you would call conservative. We are reluctant to take chances; we are reluctant to change old ways until new ones are thoroughly proven. Yet there is within us a driving desire to expand, to escape from the continuing cycles of P'nyolet. This has led, as you may well imagine, to a certain ambivalence in our racial character."

Carl was brimful of questions, but he forebore to interrupt the Laran again, since he seemed to have touched a tender nerve with his last inquiry. So he contented himself with a nod, and the ambassador went on.

"Our rate of change, slow though it is by your standards, has been occurring for a long time, much longer than your own human race. Therefore we have had time to progress beyond you in certain areas. I hasten to add that music is not one of them. The great compositions of Earth are equally well known on Lara."

Carl could not restrain himself: "Then you've been observing us for a long time! You've probably been among us without our knowing it!"

"Nearly two centuries," Netexis said, as he changed the scene again. "Although not entirely without your knowledge. This is how we travel."

"Ah! Then they are real," Carl said. "And nuclear powered, I gather. I don't see any exhaust."

"Actually gravity powered," Netexis replied. "I am not a physicist myself, my grounding being in sociology, but naturally some overlap between the sciences is inevitable, so I am aware that there is a connection between gravity and magnetism toward which your Einstein was working. We have made the connection and are able to manipulate both. If you are interested in the theory or the technical details, I am afraid someone else will have to supply them."

"Yes, I'd like that."

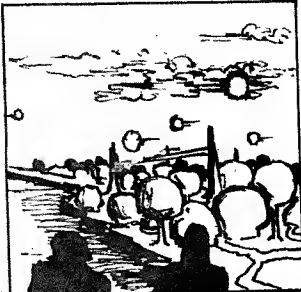
"It will be awhile, but I will notate it. The gravity drive enables us to travel near the speed of light with very little expenditure of energy. But it still requires many P'nyolet—ah, decades, that is—sometimes over a century, to travel among the stars, because of the enormous distances involved. However, time dilation—you know of this?—makes the time seem less. Even so, such space travel would be difficult psychologically for a race less long-lived or from a less stable society than ours. We have encountered none other which has established interstellar travel."

"But you have encountered other people...other intelligent races, I mean?"

"Yes. As we began to expand outward from our own star system, we encountered not only other races but other civilizations. Here is the first such.



Their planet was much smaller than your Earth—note the near horizon—and had only about a quarter of its surface covered with water. They had not developed space flight, although



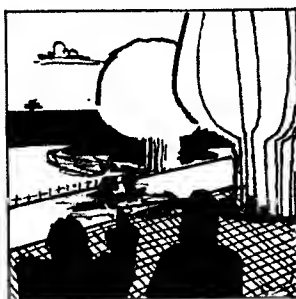
their technology was in some other respects more advanced than yours. The inhabitants were tripeds.



We thought they would be pleased to meet another intelligent race. But instead they were shocked.



We Larans were the catalyst for this....



"This particular view was captured just three days after the city you saw earlier was destroyed by nuclear warfare. Our appearance, it seems, had pushed an entire civilization over the brink of insanity. We were horrified at this, thinking it was our fault, and there was great sentiment on Lara to

give up space flight entirely. We did not go so far, but we restricted contact to unpopulated worlds only for several thousand years thereafter.

"During this time, however, we developed a science of sociology. You must understand that sociology was unknown on Lara prior to space flight. We had only one society, and everyone was fully acquainted with it. It never occurred to us to actually study it. But, given the facts we had learned about this tripod civilization, we developed a tentative sociology, based almost completely on theory and conjecture; we had no chance for observation. But the theories were extremely sophisticated, and the sociologists pled for a chance to verify them by observation, without direct contact, of other civilizations. In time, this was granted.

"Then, without ever showing ourselves, we saw another civilization exterminate itself. This time we knew we were not to blame, so our sociologists recomputed and developed new theories, even a set of sociological equations, much like chemical or mathematical equations. Among Larans, sociology is our most intricate and highly respected science. We were able to theorize that almost every planet, except a homogeneous one like Lara, will develop two dominant societies, or thought modes, or religions, or lifestyles, whatever you will, and that these two sides will contend with each other for control of the plan-

et. For the most part, the struggle will be bloody, but without permanent consequences. Only after a society has developed atomic or gravitic weapons will the contest eventually result in planetary desolation.

"With our newfound theories, we were faced with a moral challenge. We knew we would eventually find other planets on which civilization was proceeding toward oblivion. Could we ignore the situation and lose another intelligent race? Should we break our millennia-old taboos and try to help? If we interfered, would we possibly hasten the process? If the society succumbed anyway, could we be certain we were not to blame? Should we choose sides in the conflict, and on what basis? How could we make a decision of any kind?

"One Laran, our greatest sociologist, Sartek Bannovis, insisted that we had no right to impose our own ideas and preferences on a different civilization. He was convinced that our computers could identify which of the two leading societies on a planet was better qualified to succeed, using the criteria of the inhabitants of the planet themselves. Then we could aid that society to its eventual control without destroying the planet in the process."

A true Swede, Carl became restless at the ambassador's talk of "control" but remained silent while Netexis continued.

"Bannovis lived over 8000 of your years ago. In that time, we have had a chance to test his theories only twice. On both occasions, we managed to save the planet's inhabitants. Each time, we learned something.

"For example, take the idea of cultural shock. Our sociologists had never taken it into account. Remember that, although we were technically very sophisticated, we were not what you would call worldly wise. It just did not seem reasonable that these people would be so depressed by our gadgets and abilities and longevity that they would enter a kind of racial withdrawal. Yet that is what occurred. It took us nearly three generations—1500 of your years—to straighten the situation out. We did save the race as a whole, even though most of its institutions were unrecognizably altered.



"We greatly improved on our performance the second time, working through the inhabitants as much as possible while remaining in the background ourselves. This seemed to work smoothly, with one exception. We discovered that the society we had passed over for its rival bitterly resented both the rival and us. Even today, they still resist

integration into the planetary culture."

"I can well imagine they might," Carl interposed. "Don't you consider it more than just a little arrogant to enforce your will on another people, another civilization?"

Netexis was pained at the implication but responded calmly, "It is, of course, impossible to state with certainty what would happen if such and such an event had not occurred, if, for example, a nail had remained in place in a horseshoe during a critical battle." Netexis inwardly congratulated himself at having found the proper Earthly metaphor. "But we

clusively—beyond doubt—that planetary society can be stable only if it has single government, uniform, central. We choose which of the available governments to favor on the basis of our specialized observations.

"To test leading societies on last two planets encountered, it was necessary to examine typical individual from each. You may wonder how can we generalize enough from just two individuals to make decisions about entire planet. It is possible perfectly. Consider your own polls of opinion. You take small percentage of population and ask them questions. Then you assume their answers represent entire society. We do same thing, only with greater precision, working with small, small sample: one individual only.

"Problem with last two planets was that we did not know really enough about individuals chosen for study. We think now that on last planet we chose incorrectly between contending societies. This information you must not reveal to other Larans. Less preferable of two societies was given dominance with our assistance. With adequate information, genetic especially, about test subjects we would have done otherwise.

"With Earth we had glowing opportunity, due to remarkable physical resemblance between our species. As sociologist on Lara, I advocated idea of substituting child Laran for baby of Earth in each area where test subject was required. Genetic characteristics of each Laran are known thoroughly, so would be a constant factor in our equations. Only surround, ah, environment, would be different for each. By observing how Laran test subjects turned in, uh..."

"Turned out," Carl supplied.

"Yes. Turned out. Remarkable phrase. Turned out in each society, we would have absolute indication of value of society. Best turnout of individual indicates best society; best society gets our help. That turnout is Sweden."

"And you managed to place Larans here in Sweden and they have been living among us all this time?"

"This fact, I can observe, agitates you. We also were agitated. We had to give up our children, you observe. Even after I demonstrated clearly to my colleagues that it was better to have test subjects of known genetic pattern, controlled, there was no chance of getting any Laran to surrender his offspring for experiment. Fate only enabled us to manage. Two autolifts crashed into each other, first time in seven P'nyolet, leaving two Larans, both infant males, without male parents. After minor physical alteration, two infants were substituted for two infants of Earth in Canada and Slovakia. Babies of Earth replaced by Larans went to orphanages. Parents were, ah, hypnotized rather so they would be unaware of transition."

"Why Canada and Czechoslovakia?" Carl inquired.

"It was Slovakia only then, Czechoslovakia later," Carnovis amended. "Theory of mine had role in determining placement. It would take long time to provide necessary background, but I discovered obscure section of general sociological equations that indicated placement direct in United States or Russia would not reveal as much. Further, excess information from two largest nations would increase load on equations, also time of computation, and decrease statistical accuracy. Canada and Slovakia, though, were close to great powers, and we could learn much from test subjects in those countries."

"Well, who were these test subjects? Are they people I would have heard of?"

"Yes. Both probably. I will not speak of the Canada person, who is still living. He became a professional sports player, one reason why United States is not now where Sweden is."

"Telly said you were all set to pick the Russians."

"Yes. Decision was made after your war, not the nuclear one but the other big one before that. Our

sociologists were beginning to prepare for expedition to Russia when I revealed surprise.

"You observe, Lara changes slowly, very. I had introduced already two new procedures into Earth experiment, and my colleagues were not quick to allow me my third innovation, since especially I had no proof in the established formulas that there was reason behind my theory. I tried to show them my own derivations, based on unique somewhat assumptions, but they would not listen; they put off my theories.

"To abbreviate," said Carnovis, as he grew aware of his tendency to slip into technicalities, "I contended that there was third alternative, middle choice between the two poles imposed on our whole sociological system. I contended that there should be third alternative offered to each world, and my computer showed that, on Earth, third alternative should be Sweden. It was not India, as you suggested, although India was among those considered. It would take long, very, to explain why India was not chosen."

"But you say they laughed at you?"

"Yes. Laughed. They did not agree. They stopped official sanction for my idea. But I was determined to try it. So I substituted Laran male infant for child of Earth. It was dangerous, risky, because I had to do it secretly. If anyone had found out, I would have been censured severely for interfering with objectivity of experiment.

"Yet I succeeded. And so, when all sociologists were preparing to make choice for Soviet Union, I told them what I had done. They were angry thoroughly, naturally. But they had no choice. My introduction of disrupting influence at critical point had altered all their calculations. They had to recompute everything, and for that they needed newer observations. They went back to Earth and arrived in time to watch uprising in Hungary. There in leadership of Hungary forces was our Laran of Slovakia. He died ultimately—a tragedy truly."

Carl's mind raced back to the event. He had been only 12 at the time of the executions that had shocked the world, but the image of one man had burned itself from the cover of a magazine indelibly on his mind:

"Pal Maleter!" he exclaimed. In retrospect, the tall, gaunt, craggy-browed revolutionary general was unmistakably Laran in appearance.

"I observe you recall him. It should not surprise you, then, to learn why we have visited the grave back there. He was the test subject for Sweden. I think he had some intimations of his origins before his death; his book shows thoughts which on your world were termed 'spiritualism'. Often I have wondered how much he managed to guess. You have read *Markings*, yes?"

"In college, some years ago. It seems like a long time now," Carl replied. "But that reminds me of the second thing I wanted to ask you. As I understand it, you were discredited and forcibly retired by your colleagues. They won't allow you near a sociological computer any more." Carnovis's nods gave silent assent as Carl continued, "Yet you've come all this distance just to visit this one grave. At your, ah, apparently advanced age..."

"About 750 of your years, since you wonder."

"I didn't mean to pry."

"Tal scon. It is nothing. I have what you might call conceit at having outlived most of my critics. But you wonder why I travel great distance, yes?"

"It I'm not being too inquisitive," Carl agreed.

"I should have learned to talk of this long time past. You observe, my theories were vindicated, so I was entitled to reinstatement as sociologist, on professional basis purely. But my unorthodoxy was not actual cause for my ostracism. In our society, the bond of parent and child is strong, sacred almost. We felt that Maleter and the other were more fortunate



were as close to certain as we could be that these races would be extinct—their home worlds and everything on them reduced to slag—if we had not intervened. At that, we waited until the last possible moment to reveal ourselves. Please," he held up his hand to quell an incipient retort from the prince, "there are no questions you can ask that we have not asked ourselves many times over. We are fully aware of the ethical questions raised by our actions. We can only justify them by saying that life continues where otherwise there would have been none.

"This brings us to Earth. I made my own first trip to Earth back in 1885, as one of a team of investigators. I did not visit Sweden then; I went to Russia. After watching your amazing rate of progress, I reported to Laratol, our capitol, that we had to act quickly to introduce the test subjects to the two major areas to head off nuclear destruction. My projection was that it would take your race 85 years to reach nuclear capacity. At that, I underestimated you: your first atomic blast was in 1945. But by then we had reached our conclusion. We had determined to aid the Soviet Union as the ultimate controller of Earth."

Carl leaped to his feet, dangerous sparks flashing in his eyes. "You treacherous bastard! You'll never hand Sweden over to the Communists! Never! I'll personally shoot the first Russian who sets foot in Stockholm. Wipe that goddamn grin off your face. If you came here to taunt me, you're in for more than you bargained for." Sputtering, Carl stopped for breath, one hand still raised in anger.

"Not at all, not at all, quite the contrary," Netexis stammered, his "grin" of alarm becoming even more pronounced. "Please, the Russians will not rule in Sweden. I am here to make you the emperor of the Earth."

### CARNOVIS

Enbar Carnovis would have had to wait 24 years for the first reports to return to Lara. He knew he would not outlast the next P'nyolo. So, once more, he had pulled strings and finagled and bribed extra passage on a ship bound for Earth. He had arrived only five years after the ambassador, and he could see first hand the results of his own work.

But first, family obligations. Tears came easily to the old man. "Entek, Entek," he murmured, his head cradled on his arm.

"I'm sorry, sir, I didn't hear you." The straight young man (all men seemed young to Carnovis) who had guided him here was extremely solicitous. Carnovis was grateful for the attention shown to him. "Tal scon. It is nothing, nothing," he said. The young man stood a respectful distance away.

In the orbital station, they had given Carnovis a capsule history of the Transition to date. Old Gustav had lasted less than a week after Netexis's arrival, as if he had been waiting all his life for the event. *I can understand such dedication*, Carnovis had thought. Carl Gustav had acceded, proving to be a dynamic leader. Soon he was everywhere, making friends and settling international disputes with uncanny ability. Humanity, of course, was unaware that his every move was backed by reams of computer-solved Laran sociological equations. They saw only the personable young Swede working single-handed miracles, and they liked what they saw.

But Carl could not be everywhere, and the US and the SU did not ask for his help anyway. When the war started, only two years ago, the Larans were forced to step in themselves and neutralize Earth's nuclear weaponry. Then they announced that Earth would have to unite under a single government. After a few pointed but bloodless demonstrations, Earth's leaders

had accepted the Laran "suggestion". By then, of course, there was only one possible choice for the leader of the world government. The Larans didn't even have to make the suggestion themselves.

But Carl's popularity was far from unanimous. He had not been happy at the prospect of Russians in Stockholm. The Soviets, in turn, were far from overjoyed about Swedes in Moscow (though they privately conceded that Swedes were infinitely preferable to Yankees). Still, there were hard-core malcontents. The riots, terrorism, actual and attempted assassinations—all these were recounted briefly, and Carnovis was still shaking his head as he had boarded the shuttle craft. *Fools! They are fools! They do not realize what we have done for them. They do not realize the sacrifices we have made, that I have made. We should have let them turn their planet into a gigantic cinder.*

That thought fled immediately when he saw the oceans again. *All that water, all that life! Of course we had to save it.*

And now this considerate young man had taken the time to conduct him across the grasslands—that beautiful glow where their star was disappearing over the horizon—and, of course, finally, the stone.

It was massive, a raw chunk of granite ripped from the planet itself half a generation before and inscribed with those strange characters—letters he had first seen nearly a century earlier when a computer had printed them out before his eyes after years of work—letters he could never forget. Tears again clouded his eyes. He stood and ran his hand along the rough edge of the stone. A whispered prayer to his deity escaped his lips, then he turned to the waiting Carl. "Thank you. I would like to go now," Carnovis said.

### CARL (2)

Carl walked even more slowly on the way back to the autolift, for now the sun had set, and only a dusky sky illuminated their path.

"Would you mind if I asked you a few questions, Professor Carnovis?"



"Eh? Tal scon. Uh, no, I do not mind. Ask."  
 "Well, if you're sure it wouldn't bother you...."  
 "No, no, please. You have been kind. I should do what I can to justify my presence here. Ask."  
 "Well, there are really two questions puzzling me. First of all, I know that you are directly responsible for Sweden being chosen

for its present position as center of Earth government. Naturally, I'm pleased and grateful. But Telly, Ambassador Netexis, that is, has been particularly reluctant to tell me *why* Sweden was picked, and not, say, India. I thought you might be able to say."

"I should not. Young Netexis must have explained to you about cultural shock, yes? And why we try to avoid it?"

"Yes."

"As much as possible, we try to minimize shock effects, but effects are never unavoidable completely. Still, you deserve certainly to know if anyone deserves. And you are guarding enough secrets that one more should not be too much. You must promise not to tell?" Carnovis cocked an eyebrow.

Delighted at the old Laran's unconventional attitude of cheerful connivance, Carl nodded. "I promise," he affirmed.

"Well. Our sociological theories demonstrate con-

NILSSON (2)

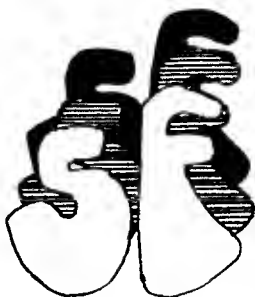
actually on Earth than on Lara without parent as guide. So it was easy comparatively to send them to Earth. The child for Sweden was different matter, though, especially since I could not reveal what I was doing." The old scientist's eyes misted again.

"Please," Carl said, "I don't mean to..." A wave of Carnovis's hand stopped him.

"It is proper. You must know anyway because it explains request, ah, favor, I will ask of you. I will die soon, you observe, and I would like your permission to be buried next to my son."

Bjorn Nilsson was very intelligent and quick-witted. He was very imaginative in his own way, too, at spotting ambushes, for instance. Yet in other ways his imagination was limited. Now, as he ran to catch up with the two figures nearing the autolift in the distance, it never occurred to him to pause even momentarily by the rock where they had stood for so long.

And so he passed on, leaving the newly risen ghost moon to duplicate the work of some ancient stonecutter, etching in light and shadow the granite word  
HAMMARSKJOLD



## VULGAR ADVERTISEMENT

[Between the writing of "News Nurd" and the printing of this issue of Janus, we obviously overcame the bad case of ennui I spoke of in "NN"—with a vengeance if the above page number is at all accurate. Let me assure you (and our intrepid typists, Diane Martin and Richard Russell, whom we expect to be recovered Real Soon Now), that a 71-page Janus is not, I repeat, is not indicative of things to come. Janus's length this time is merely the result of the unrestricted enthusiasm of fans who have acquired a bulk mailing permit. Janus 9 will be the result of chastened bulk-mailing fans. It will also, by the way, be distributed immediately after SunCon and contain what we fervently hope are the first WorldCon reports to see print anywhere. Anyhow, in this space reserved for our Vulgar Advertisement, let me acquaint you with the activities of Madison fandom. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

### FANZINES

- Our* (Perri Corrick-West, ed.) Multi-colored eclecticism.
- Corrickist* (Perri Corrick-West and Richard C. West, "eds.") Oneshot farce; special nuptial issue.
- Janus* (Janice Bogstad and Jeanne Comoll, eds.) Feminist-oriented genzine. 75¢ each or \$3.00/4 issues (1 year).
- Operist* (Richard C. West, ed.) Scholarly journal devoted to works of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, et alii.
- Star Quest* (James A. Cox, ed.) Blatant sword-and-sorcery zine.
- Starling* (Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell, eds.) Hugonominated personal journal of popular culture: music, SF, comix, movies, mysteries, comics, etc. 50¢ each or \$2.00/5 issues.

### CONVENTION

WisCon 1978: the Wisconsin Convention of Science Fiction. Co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension. Scheduled for February 24-26 of 1978. Featuring Susan Wood as fan guest of honor. Good times.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Madison Science Fiction Group. Meets Wednesdays at Nick's Bar and Grill, 226 State St. in Madison, except last Wednesday of each month is the "event" night, usually discussion of an SF author or theme led by group members, open to the public (hence publicized), and held somewhere on the University of Wisconsin campus. Also produces radio plays and book reviews on WORT-FM.
- Book of the Month Circle. Discusses a different novel every month. Meets informally in people's homes and apartments. Pretzels featured.
- Dungeons and Dragons. 2½ Dungeon Masters associated with the group manage to hold at least one adventure per week between them.
- Animated film. Based on Fred Haskell's rendition of "Mediocre Fred", this project is scheduled for production in the fall.
- Education. "SF As a Way of Looking at the World" was a ½-credit short course taught at Madison's City High School by Philip Kaveny and guest speakers. The class will be producing a one-shot (*Under the Carpet*) this summer.
- Speakers' Bureau. Presentations (some with slides) on any SF-related topic.

### UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION

All of the foregoing activities are coordinated by:

SF<sup>3</sup>

the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction

a non-profit, non-stock Wisconsin corporation. For information on any of the activities, or on how you can become an active or supporting member of SF<sup>3</sup> (contributions are tax exempt), write to:

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BUS STOP

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CALL THIS  
FANZINE  
JANUS?

BECAUSE YOU NERD,  
**JASSHOLE** WOULD  
HAVE BEEN A  
LITTLE RUDE!

2 BABIES  
EAT EACH  
OTHER!

DEATH  
PENALTY  
FOR  
LITTERING

THROW  
AWAY  
THAT  
TRUSS

DAILY NEWS

WORLD  
COMING  
TO  
END!

JAN STEFFAN  
MADISON 1977